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THE
CHRISTIAN'S
SUNDAY COMPANION.

THE
CHRISTIAN'S
SUNDAY COMPANION;

BEING
REFLECTIONS IN PROSE AND VERSE
ON THE
COLLECT, EPISTLE AND GOSPEL, AND PROPER LESSONS,

For each Sunday;

WITH A VIEW TO THEIR IMMEDIATE CONNECTION.

By MRS. J. A. SARGANT.



~~~~~  
"Oh grant me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies."—

PSALM cxix. 125.  
~~~~~

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1843.

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THIS VOLUME
IS AFFECTIONATELY AND RESPECTFULLY
INSCRIBED TO
THE REV. GEORGE BURGESS, M.A.,
TO WHOSE EARLY AND EXCELLENT INSTRUCTION,
THE AUTHOR,
UNDER PROVIDENCE, IS INDEBTED,
FOR THAT WHICH IS DEAREST TO HER—
THE MEANS OF AIDING, SHE HUMBLY HOPES, THE
SPIRITUAL IMPROVEMENT OF HER FELLOW-
CREATURES, AND OF PROMOTING THE
GLORY OF HER CREATOR.

CLAPTON SQUARE.



PREFACE.

IT is with no assumed feelings of apprehension that this volume is submitted to the public; nor is it from any degree of latent vanity, that allusion is made to the difficulty of the undertaking. Conscious as the author is, of all that may probably and with justice be said of the execution of her design, she professes no more than she painfully feels, nor entreats for greater indulgence from her readers than she knows to be necessary. This alone she ventures confidently to affirm, that the work was begun in a humble spirit, and with an anxious desire to supply a deficiency which she believed to exist—a manual of religious poetry, aided by concise explanatory remarks on parts of the Church Service, fitted for the comprehension of youth, and the devout though unlearned reader, which might serve as an introduction to superior information in a higher class, and obviate the want of further instruction in a lower. No display of knowledge, therefore, which she does not possess, will, she trusts, be found in the following

pages. No presumptuous attempt to impart instruction to others on points on which she herself needs information—no departure, in short, from that modesty which becomes her sex and station.

That she *has* found the undertaking in its execution far more difficult than she at first anticipated, she unreservedly avows. That she did not abandon it, she entreats may be ascribed to a feeling stronger than the mere mortification arising from a sense of defeat—the hope of so far succeeding as to benefit those at least, who may be considered beneath the exertions of powers superior to her own. If this result should follow her labours, and a kind and considerate public should so far appreciate her motives, as to spare that severity of judgment, which, under other circumstances, they might have been inclined to exercise, she will be amply recompensed; for, to promote the best interests of the rising generation, is the principal aim and wish of her heart; and, surely there is no better prospect of effecting this desirable end than by calling forth religious feeling, by means of sound religious principles, and simple but correct religious knowledge.

It may, perhaps, be proper to state that the poetical part of the volume was written before the idea suggested itself of prefixing a few preliminary observations upon each Sunday. As soon, however, as it did arise in her mind it was adopted; for its utility was apparent. Guided by divine inspiration, our Holy Church, it may be reverently said, “has

done all things well,"—well alike in the doctrines she sets forth, in the regulations she adopts, and in the harmony subsisting between the various parts of her service. Yet numbers, not only of the young, but even of those who are in the constant habit of presenting themselves in her courts, are entirely ignorant of this judicious agreement, and consider what they hear or read as detached parts, and not as connecting links ; and, consequently, lose much of the instruction as well as the comfort, designed for her faithful members.

To many it has never occurred, that there is an intimate connection and correspondence between the Collect, the Epistle and Gospel, and the Proper Lessons of the day. Much, indeed, is it to be lamented, that a want of knowledge in this respect, should retard the progress of religious feeling, or of firm attachment to the Church in the young, or deprive the devout, though uninstructed mind, of the cheering and salutary impression which the Church, in her wisdom, intended to convey. It was with a modest hope to obviate this disadvantage, therefore, that the suggestion of the moment was adopted. Approaching the subject, however, with great reverence and humility, the author has scrupulously confined herself to condensing the remarks of those eminent divines of the Church of England, whose writings, though familiar to the more learned, are yet unknown to and out of the reach of many for whose use this volume is designed.

It has been with a view to attract the attention of her readers, and to avoid that monotony which is always irksome to the youthful mind, that the author has endeavoured to vary as much as possible the metre of her poems. She makes this remark because she apprehends she has occasionally sacrificed strict poetical propriety and taste, to a desire to please, and may even have laid herself open to an imputation which would be very painful to her—that of affectation. A long acquaintance with young persons, and an unabated affection for them, have shown her the necessity as well as the policy, not to say the kindness, of a certain degree of compliance with their peculiarities and inclinations.

For pain or for pleasure, for mortification or joyful gratitude, the volume is now, however, fairly launched into the world; and it becomes the author, without further comment, to commit it with all deference to the judgment of the public, and its result with all humility and submission to Him, for whose glory it was humbly undertaken, and whose blessing alone can make it prosper.

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THE
CHRISTIAN'S SUNDAY COMPANION.

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah i. *Epistle*, Romans xii. 8.

Evening Lesson, Isaiah ii. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xxi. i.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY GOD, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which Thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when He shall come again in His glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through Him who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, now and ever. Amen.

The Church divides her year into two parts—the first beginning with Advent Sunday; in which she commemorates our blessed Redeemer's living here

on earth, and embraces the Creed; in the second, beginning with Trinity Sunday, she instructs us to live after his example, and enlarges upon the Commandments; and thus unites faith and practice.

The word Advent signifies *coming*, and is here applied to the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whose expected appearance was the hope of all mankind, such a Redeemer being promised at the fall of our first parents. Dark night, a night of ignorance and guilt, had long covered the earth, and at the time of his birth, had enveloped it in its deepest shades. It was in the midst of this gloom that the harbinger of the Lord, the bright morning star, the holy Baptist appeared, to give notice that the Day-spring from on high was at hand. In joyful remembrance of this event the Church commences her year on this day, not calculating her seasons by the sun in the visible heavens, but according to the course of the Sun of Righteousness, her Lord and Master. She now calls on her children to "awake," and by a due observance of the first advent of Christ, to prepare for his second and last, when he shall come in glory to judge the world.

The Collect for this Sunday, which is repeated every day as proper to the season, clearly and expressly instructs us in the design of it. It implores the grace of God to enable us to put off the works of darkness or wickedness, and to array ourselves in the heavenly armour of Christianity, that so, fighting against our spiritual enemies, the great powers of

darkness, we may live as becomes the followers of a holy Redeemer, looking for the final coming of our Lord and Judge.*

The Epistle accordingly, by the most powerful considerations, calls on us to awake from spiritual sloth and become active in our Christian course, declaring that the night of ignorance is past, that the day of salvation—the light of divine knowledge—is at hand. As, therefore, we pray in the Collect to be enlightened by the word of God, and enabled by his grace to lead a godly life, it becomes a duty to study with increased attention and earnestness, the holy Scriptures, and there seek the light which shall rescue us from the darkness with which sin would still blind us.

In the Gospel† we are presented with a striking instance of our Lord's humility, in his riding lowly upon an ass into Jerusalem, immediately previous to

* St. Jerome is thought to have selected the Epistles and Gospels: many of the Collects were doubtless framed by the same venerable Father. All however have the stamp of antiquity, the Reformers having confined themselves to a strict revisal of the old ones rather than making new ones. The Epistles are selected for the most part out of the writings of the apostles. They are so called, because they were sent by way of letter by the apostles to the several churches or places to which they are inscribed.

† The Gospels are taken out of the writings of the four Evangelists, and in honour to our Saviour, whose words and works they are, the Church commands them to be read and heard standing; whereby we not only denote reverence, but a resolution to adhere and *stand* to them.

his bitter and shameful death on the cross for our sake. In this circumstance we behold a type of his glorious return to judge all the world at the last day, when all mysteries shall be made manifest, and a just and awful retribution upon sinners shall fully vindicate God's righteous dealings with his creatures.

The Proper Lessons for this season and till the commencement of Lent are taken from the prophecy of Isaiah, which was expressly reserved for this purpose. There is a close connection between the Epistle and the First Lesson,—both powerfully awakening us from the stupor of indifference or guilt, and calling loudly upon us to repent, and to cleanse ourselves from all sin in, as our Church teaches, the blood of our Redeemer. As this season is penitential preparatory to Christmas, as Lent is to Easter, the propriety of selecting this chapter will be manifest.

The Evening Lesson accords with the Gospel, and leads us to a contemplation of the enlarged and glorious state of the Church, the kingdom of the Messiah, upon his coming and calling all nations into it. Peace and happiness are promised to the faithful and humble followers of Christ, of every nation, Jew or Gentile; while, with promises of his first coming, most awful threatenings are denounced in his second against the wilfully disobedient, who shall at length tremble when it is too late, for the glory of his majesty, and for his rising "to shake terribly the earth."

ST. MATTHEW xxi. 5.

“ Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass.”

PROFOUND and midnight darkness clothes the sky,
No welcome star shoots forth a cheerful ray ;
The wind itself low hushed forgets to sigh,
And all is still, as life had passed away.

It is a solemn hour, and one that speaks
With solemn though with silent voice to all ;
An hour which wakeful memory oft-times seeks
Forgotten errors sternly to recall.

Some sound th’ attentive ear would gladly hail,
Till, scared awhile, sleep’s balmy kiss again
Our eyelids lightly seals, and conscience pale
Seeks, like ourselves, a respite from her pain.

At such a moment should the bird of morn
His first shrill signal give of coming dawn,
We start, as though that signal spoke
Of death, of judgment, and awoke
The terrors that we once must view.
But evanescent is the thought,
Unwelcome to our senses brought,
Transient remorse as early dew.
Again in dull security we sleep,
And all alarm in glad oblivion steep.

And year by year the Church her call,
With duteous care and tender love,
Still utters to her sons—"Prepare
To meet your Saviour from above."
And year by year she calls in vain,
We hear her voice and partly wake;
But quickly lay us down again,
And press the sins we should forsake.

Up! rouse thyself, thou slumbering soul!
Thy idols cast to bat and mole:
The Lord, the Lord is nigh!
Lay low each haughty look,
He comes the universe to shake,
To rend the melting sky;
The world to save, his own to make
Those who his rule forsook.
Go forth to meet the train,
That leads him into Salem's walls;
Join in the rapturous strain
Which cheers the meek, the proud appalls.
Each garment cast aside
That owns pollution's guilty hue;
From Him thou canst not hide
One secret fault: nor dare to strew
His path with verdant bough
If underneath those shining leaves
Lurk serpent sin; lest thou,
Like one who his death chaplet weaves,

Thy own destruction seal.
Gentle he is, as those sad tears,
O'er Judah shed, reveal;
But awful he in wrath appears.
See him with scourges drive
Those who his temple had defiled;
Beware thou then, and strive
Thy breast to cleanse from passion wild,
That it may be
From sin so free,
Fit dwelling for thy God it prove—
He comes! each stumbling-block remove.
"Cast up, cast up,"—lay darkness bare,
A highway for your God prepare.
Though lowly now he shall descend
To call the nations forth and blend
The attributes of Judge and Friend,
And truth with grace unite.
"Arouse!" the Church repeats her cry,
"Arouse!" the woods and vales reply,
The Lord our God himself is nigh—
Jehovah, Lord and Light.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah v. *Epistle*, Romans xv. 14.
Evening Lesson, Isaiah xxiv. *Gospel*, St. Luke xxi. 25.

COLLECT.

BLESSED LORD, who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Christ, in his first advent, came to us in great humility to save the world; in his second he shall come in all the majesty of heaven to judge it. In the meantime, whilst the day of salvation yet lasts, that we may be truly benefited by the former, and prepared for the latter, we must carefully endeavour to secure his blessed and spiritual advent in our hearts. He has promised, and his promises are sure, that he will ever be present with his Church by his Spirit to the end of time,* and to come and make his abode with those who shall love him.† It is by a

* St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

† St. John xiv. 23.

proper use of the holy Scriptures, as read and explained to us by the Church, by a faithful participation of his holy sacraments, and by a patient dependence on his Holy Spirit, that we can hope to secure this greatest of blessings, and so prepare ourselves for the fruition of his presence eternally in heaven. No one who does not study the sacred Volume, therefore, with a humble view to spiritual improvement, with an earnest desire to know God's will that he may perform it, can expect to secure happiness in this life, or hope to escape from the wrath of the life which is to come. Under this conviction, the Church having first announced the coming of our Lord, next points out the means by which we may rejoice in that appearance, and be ready to receive our Redeemer and Judge.

As light first sprang up by the divine word, so also must light from the same divine source dawn upon our souls, and draw them out of darkness and error. Christ is equally the author of light in the spiritual as in the material world, and he, in his mercy, came to be a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as to be "the glory of his people Israel." In the Epistle, accordingly, this participation of the blessing of his first coming is shewn, that being aroused from sin, and encouraged by his grace, we may be enabled to endure the terrors of his second coming, set before us in the Gospel.

The destruction of Jerusalem was a type of the general destruction of the world,—the cause of the

catastrophe being the same in each—the rejection of the means of grace vouchsafed by the Almighty to a rebellious race. In the Morning Lesson this is very affectingly represented in the prophetic song of God the Father to his well-beloved Son, and afterwards repeated by that blessed Son in one of his own parables.* The Evening as well as the Morning Lesson conveys the same awful admonition, viz., to take heed lest by disobedience and unbelief we incur God's anger, and so draw upon ourselves, not only temporal but eternal destruction. The forbearance of the Almighty must not encourage us to despise his warning; though he tarry he will yet come, and that also as a thief in the night, unlooked for by a careless and ungodly generation.

* St. Luke xx. 9.

ST. LUKE XXI. 31.

"When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

There is a dreadful day in store
When heaven and earth shall be no more ;
When ocean shall have raged its last,
And the loud wind have spent its blast ;
When all shall perish, all shall pass away,
Nor moon shall shine by night, nor sun by day.

But ere that long predicted hour
When vengeance shall display its power,
And sinners bursting from their tomb
Shall rise to hear their final doom ;
Distress and woe 'midst nations shall be given
And fearful signs shall mark the wrath of Heaven.

Peace shall desert th' affrighted earth,
Safety and love the shelt'ring hearth ;
Fierce words and fiercer deeds shall rend
The ties of neighbour and of friend.
The brother's hand against his brother turn,
And even woman's breast with fury burn.

All hearts shall be benumbed with fear,
And nature's doom shall then be near ;
Dire earthquakes then shall shake the land,—
The scornful waves disdain the strand.

Each work of art be levell'd with the ground,
And loudest thunders through the air rebound.

What means that dreadful crash ? Earth reels—
The day has stopped its golden wheels.
Behold ! the heavens are all on fire,
And 'midst those flames with groans expire.
He comes ! he comes ! the Judge of all the world,
By angel hands his banner is unfurl'd.

Ye prisoners of hope, arise !
And meet your Saviour in the skies ;
Lift up your heads, redemption's nigh,—
The just shall live, the guilty die.
Oh ! righteous doom, that wakes that doleful wail,
The last man utters to the last sad gale.

One shout, one universal groan,
And former things, for aye, are flown.
New earth—new heavens appear, where sin
Nor woe, nor death shall enter in.
Where, perfect made, the just with Christ shall dwell
'Midst joys no heart conceives—no tongue can tell.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah xxv. *Epistle*, 1 Cor. iv. 1.
Evening Lesson, Isaiah xxvi. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xi. 2.

COLLECT.

O LORD JESU CHRIST, who at Thy first coming didst send Thy messenger to prepare Thy way before Thee ; Grant that the ministers and stewards of Thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready Thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at Thy second coming to judge the world, we may be found an acceptable people in Thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Our blessed Lord, as a King, followed the example of sovereigns, and sent a messenger to announce his approach, and to prepare for his arrival. The office therefore of the holy Baptist, and that of his appointed ministers is the same—to prepare men by the right use of the means of grace, for acceptance and salvation at his second coming in glory. The Church has therefore with great propriety, made

this one of her Ember seasons.* The intent of these is to implore, by prayers and fasting, the divine direction and blessing in the ordination of fit men to serve in the sacred ministry, and surely none who have correct notions of the responsibility incurred by those who shall become ministers of the Gospel, or who have any just feeling for their own welfare and that of the Church, or the slightest gratitude for the mercies which they receive from the religion they profess, can refuse to join earnestly and heartily in the petitions thus offered up in their behalf. Adopting the call of the Baptist, the Church continues to enforce upon all orders of men the necessity of repentance, forewarning us in the Epistle, of Christ's re-appearing to judge the world, when even the most hidden things of the heart shall be made manifest.

The labours of the Clergy and the object of them are shewn in the Collect—they are to turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; and consequently it is the bounden duty of their hearers to listen to them with reverence, and to obey them heartily and cheerfully, in order that at the second coming of the Son of Man to judge the world, we

* Ember is a Saxon word, signifying what returns in a regular or periodical order. Others, however, consider it as a word denoting ashes, because it was the custom to scatter ashes on the head in token of humiliation. These weeks, occurring in the four seasons of the year, are called the *fasts* of the four seasons.

may, indeed, be found an acceptable people in the sight of God. To slight this admonition then is to condemn him whose servants they are, and to throw away our own salvation.

The Lessons of the day are admirably calculated to rouse us from a state of indifference, of sin, and sloth, to an active life of holiness, while the downfall of the enemies of the Church, and its future exaltation, are the glorious theme of the prophecies which they contain.

ISAIAH XXV. 9.

*"And it shall be said in that day, Lo! this is our God; we
have waited for him, and he will save us."*

Oh! what a bitter change was wrought
On this fair earth by Adam's sin;
No heavy cloud with deluge fraught,
Nor angry winds, nor tempest's din,
Nor scorching heat, nor with'ring drought,
Nor furious blast, its bosom seared.
But all that look of love had caught,
Which first Creation's work had cheered,
When glittering from its watery bed this rising globe appeared.

Woe was a sound man ne'er had heard,
He knew not then as now to weep;
Joyous his heart as joyous bird,
Gentler than infant's was his sleep.
Pain had not woke the murmur deep,
Nor had his bosom heaved a sigh;
He knew not what it was to keep
Lone watching by the closing eye.
He had not seen another's death, nor fear'd himself to die.

But now the merest child can tell
Himself, as earth a burthen bears;
How sad to weep for one loved well,
How sad a face oft Nature wears.

But, lo ! our God himself prepares
To soothe our sorrows, doubts dispel ;
Bid death expire in its own snares—
To yield its prey the grave compel,
And rescue Adam's fallen race from ruin and from Hell.

His promise read and trust—" I bring
A refuge from the storm, a shade
From heat ; and soon Death's haughty king
His own destruction shall be made.
The tyrant's anger shall be staid,
All tears be wiped from ev'ry eye,—
Reproach shall cease : the ransom paid,
Thus shall the joyous captives cry,
' We waited for our God in hope, and now behold Him nigh.'"

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah xxx. *Epistle*, Philippians iv. 4.

Evening Lesson, Isaiah xxxii. *Gospel*, St. John i. 19.

COLLECT.

O LORD! raise up, we pray Thee, Thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, Thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through the satisfaction of Thy Son our Lord, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

The near approach of any event, highly important to ourselves, has a natural tendency to arouse reflection, and even to create in us a feeling of awe. It matters not what degree of happiness we may promise to ourselves as its result; serious and solemn thoughts, in spite almost of ourselves, spring up in our mind, and an inward sense of demerit or unworthiness insensibly but irresistibly forces itself upon us. Perhaps it would not be presumptuous to say that the Church has framed her holy offices for this Sunday, though in a much higher sense, in a spirit strongly partaking of this feeling.

The Collect is one of great humility, deeply expressive of the miserable consequences of our fallen nature, and implying a proper confession of our faith.

In it we intimate our inability, and its mortifying cause, on the one hand, to do that which must yet be done to ensure eternal happiness—the running properly the race set before us—and acknowledge on the other, that the assistance which can alone make us capable of doing this, must be the grace and mercy of God, granted to us through the satisfaction afforded His justice by our Lord and Saviour. Nor are the evil consequences of sin felt only by a few; the fall of Adam affects all creation, and has been the cause of mournful complaint by the best and holiest of his posterity in all ages, who have uniformly acknowledged that the power to do well has never been equalled by the inclination. The desire of a Redeemer becomes the greater as the necessity of one is the more apparent. Conscious of our need, and of our wretchedness, the Church, therefore, instructs us to implore the divine assistance, and the more earnestly as the approach of our Lord draws nigh, lest we lose the inestimable benefit that his first coming procured for us.

The Epistle, warning us that the Lord is at hand, commands us to rejoice; nor is this injunction at variance with the penitential strain of the Collect; for there is no exercise of religion that is unattended with gratification, the very tears of contrition are but seeds which will hereafter spring up into blissful recollection. At the same time we are warned to be moderate. The Christian must exhibit no extravagance in any respect, but staying himself with awful

reverence upon his God, "be careful for nothing;" neither oppressed by misfortune nor carried into any excesses of joy, but possessing his soul in patience and tranquillity.

By her selection of the portion of Scripture for the Gospel, the Church instructs us to listen with renewed attention to the voice of Him who once called the multitudes in the wilderness to repentance, that they might be prepared to meet the Messiah with becoming graces, and to make ready ourselves to receive Him in like manner, with fresh resolutions of amendment, in purity and faith. The testimony afforded by Christ to the Baptist's mission as His harbinger and messenger, confers the highest value on the Baptist's own humble declaration of himself, and attestations of the superiority of our Lord; for if one, "than whom no greater prophet was born of women," as affirmed by our Saviour, could with truth assert that he was not worthy to perform the most menial offices for Him "who was to come after him," it follows that the nature of the last must be divine, and that as God he was acknowledged and announced by the former.

The Proper Lessons by many awful denunciations and admonitions teach us to renounce the idolatrous worship of the world, which is spiritual Egypt, and to whose bondage, slavish as it is, the heart is but too strongly attached; and lead us to Christ, our only rock and defence, our refuge, and our refreshment, and whose service alone is freedom.

ISAIAH xxxi. 1.

"Behold! a King shall reign in righteousness."

The crooked paths make straight!
A highway for the Lord prepare!
He comes,—Hell's dread and hate,
The Son, the long-expected heir:
Desire of nations he,
The theme of prophecy,
Lost Adam's hope, the holy patriarchs' God,
He who shall rule all nations with his rod.

Not as on Sinai's hill
Doth he, the lowly Saviour, come;
As Hermon's dews distil,
Gentle he leaves his Father's home,
Quits his eternal throne,
And comes to seek his own;
Empties himself of glory, that as man
He may the task complete his love began.

Level each haughty thought,
Strew the rough places with thy pride;
Messiah must be sought
With humble breasts and sanctified.
Woe to the lofty heart
From sin that will not part,
Nor feeling in himself a Saviour's need,
Careless hosannah sings, or sees him bleed.

Earth! thou hadst cause to groan,
When man his first allegiance broke ;
The thorn and thistle sown
Soon changed thy face—the desert woke.
Rejoice! rejoice! thy curse
No more shall tongue rehearse.
Fair fruits and flowers, the myrtle and the rose,
Thy beauteous bosom henceforth shall disclose.

He comes all things to change,
To bring the peace for ages fled ;
Nor savage beast shall range,
Nor gentle blood again be shed.
The cockatrice's nest
Be safe as mother's breast ;
Nor friend, nor foe shall injure or destroy,
Nor aught in holy mount of God annoy.

Lo! Heaven hath caught the strain,
Th' expectant angels wond'ring wait,
Eager to form his train.
They stand at their own golden gate,
Ready to bear to earth
News of the holy birth,
And fill the skies with their celestial song—
“ Our God now deigns mankind to dwell among.”

O heart! if angels feel
Such joy for thee—if earth can raise
A voice, art thou of steel,
That thou can'st faint and coldly praise

The Saviour of thy race?

Lord! grant thy quick'ning grace,
That Heaven and Earth may not reproach our guilt—
Thy birth was vain, vainly thy blood was spilt.

Let not a fatal sleep
Press down our heavy hearts: let not
The world in pleasure steep
Each heedless sense, till all forgot
We still are unprepared
When thou dost come, and bared
The red right hand of wrath we shuddering see,
And vainly seek from thy dread face to flee.

But fast the hours draw nigh,—
We meet not in the holy fane,
Till with a joyful eye
And grateful heart we raise the strain,—
“To us a Child is born”—
Hail to the blessed morn,
Our gracious God hath looked from heaven and smiled,
And mercy, truth, and love are reconciled.

CHRISTMAS DAY.*

Morning Lesson, Isa. ix. 1—8. *Evening Lesson*, Isa. vii. 10—17.
Second Lesson, Luke ii. 1—15. *Second Lesson*, Titus iii. 4—9.
Epistle, Hebrews i. *Gospel*, St. John i.
Proper Psalms, xix. xlv. lxxxv. *Proper Ps.*, lxxxix. cx. cxxxii.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast given us Thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; Grant that we being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

In the words of St. Chrysostom, “this is the most venerable and tremendous of all festivals, and the mother of all festivals; for,” adds he, “the thing that was done this festival was more astonishing than all the others. For that Christ should die when he was a man, was a thing of natural consequence; but that being God, he should be willing to become man, and condescend to humble himself beyond all

* Mass is an old Saxon word, signifying festival.

thought and imagination, this is indeed wonderful and astonishing in the highest degree."

The holy offices of this high and blessed day are admirably constructed by the Church to the glory and adoration of the divinity of our Lord, while she presents to us the wonderful spectacle of his humanity. That he was very God and very man is the fundamental doctrine of our holy religion, nor is it to be more implicitly believed, than joyfully and thankfully received. If Christ were not God or not man then are we still under condemnation, and all our hopes of salvation are vain,—we are still in our sins. God be blessed then for that mysterious union of the Godhead and of human nature, which secures our redemption, and consequently our eternal felicity.

The Collect, with devout thankfulness, acknowledges this great truth, and implores the gift of the Holy Spirit that we may finally attain to the possession of that high glory which our Lord's humiliation purchased for us. It teaches us also that we must be *daily* renewed by his grace in contradiction of the erroneous notion that spiritual life can attain its full growth at once. In vain indeed are we *regenerated* if the spiritual life imparted at our Baptism be not nourished and fed by constant supplies of grace; the soul must perish as inevitably as the body, unless it receive proper sustenance, and be duly and carefully watched.

The Epistle, in elevated terms, celebrates the

divinity of Christ: the Church having carefully made selection of this portion of Holy Scriptures to guard against the possibility of a misconception of the nature and character of the Messiah. The Gospel is in perfect accordance with the Epistle, declaring in the clearest terms, the union of the divine and human nature of our Lord, and fixing our faith upon the eternal Word, the everlasting Son of the Father, made flesh and dwelling among us.

The Lessons are entirely of the same exalted character, celebrating both prophetically and historically the mighty God, born a child, and taking human nature upon him. The whole service is calculated to fill us with the utmost gratitude to God, with love to our fellow-creatures, and with *holy* joy, for all other is a desecration of the day; and shows, to say the least, a lamentable misapprehension of the sacredness which characterizes it. The sociality and cheerfulness of family meetings cannot fail of being pleasing to Him who brought "good will to men" on this day; but as "glory to God" was also a part of His mission, it must needs be that we spend it as is consonant with that glory, and our own name as Christians.

ISAIAH IX. 6.

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given."

Now is joy each bosom filling,
Christ, the Saviour, Christ is born ;
Heaven and Earth in chorus willing
Rapturous hail th' auspicious morn.
Righteousness and Peace have kissed,
Former sins hath God dismissed.

Sweet companions long while parted,
Man his way pursued alone ;
Bowed by sorrow, broken hearted,
Bitter cause had he to groan.
Your embrace restores his hope,
Heaven once more is in his scope.

Lo ! he lies in infant weakness
Lord before the world began ;
Full of greatness, full of meekness,
Perfect God and perfect man.
Rightly let us sing of thee,
Touch our lips and set them free.

Thou the Father everlasting,
Mighty God, the Prince of Peace ;
O'er thy shoulder henceforth casting
Power that never more shall cease.

Thou hast stablished David's throne—
Make the kingdoms all thine own.

Born to save our souls benighted,
Born of promise, wondrous child ;
Heaven doth sing thy praise delighted,
Justice yields to mercy mild.
See thee in thy cradle laid,
Guarded by the Mother Maid.

In a stable thou art lying,
Brutes thy first companions are,
Yet unseen are angels vying
Who shall shew thee greatest care.
Beauteous infant ! Lord of heaven !
For our ransom thou art given.

Mark the rays of glory streaming
O'er the royal infant's brow ;
Heavenly love around is beaming,
Anger finds no entrance now.
God, the Father, smiles on earth,
Since his Son partakes man's birth.

While our hearts with joy are beating
May we ask, " Didst thou then weep ?"
Didst thou give man's usual greeting
To a world where thou shouldst reap
Woe and sorrow, shame and slight,
Friend's neglect and foe's despite ?

All our weakness fully sharing,
Tears, no doubt, our Saviour shed ;
Heed we then lest reckless daring
We in joy to sin be led ;
But let thought of those first tears
Temper bliss with holy fears.

Let us not, the truth o'erlooking
Christ for us has left his throne,
All restraint unwisely brooking
Mirth display he would disown.
May each heart fit dwelling be,
Lord of life, to welcome thee.

Peace the angels are proclaiming,
Peace the earth re-echoes wide.
Nature's self her freedom claiming,
Waits in hope a happier tide.
Pledge that bondage is o'erpast,—
Pledge that Hell has wrought its last.

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah xxxvii. *Epistle*, Galatians iv. 1.

Evening Lesson, Isaiah xxxviii. *Gospel*, St. Matt. i. 18.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us Thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin ; Grant that we being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end, Amen.

The Church, prolonging the festivity of this holy season, repeats on this Sunday, the Collect for Christmas Day ; thereby imploring the perpetual blessings and benefits of our Saviour's birth.

The Epistle enlarges on these, fixing our contemplation on the love of God, the Father, who for our sake and for our salvation, sent His blessed and co-eternal Son to take our nature upon him, that we, through Him, might become his adopted children, and sealed with his Spirit, be made heirs with him of glory.

The Gospel communicates the glad tidings of our Redeemer's miraculous birth; nor can we be too careful in preserving in our mind the great truth, that whilst he was man of the nature of his mother, he was very God, a Saviour; who is no other than the Lord Jehovah, manifested in the flesh, that he might destroy his enemy and ours, the devil, and, according to his promise, "save his people from their sins;" or, in other words, from the punishment due to them.

In the Morning Lesson we may behold the triumphs of our Almighty Captain over sin and Satan, shadowed out in the deliverance of his people, the Jews, from the proud and blasphemous threats of Sennacherib,—while, in the miraculous recovery of Hezekiah from apparently mortal sickness, we are taught to look to Him who has healed us of a still more fatal malady—the sickness of sin; and so prepares us to join in the praises and thanksgivings of the holy monarch.

ISAIAH XXXviii. 1.

"Thus saith the Lord, set thy house in order ; for thou shalt die, and not live."

If then the spangled skies the heavens are telling
In night's calm ear, what mighty hand on high
First formed them out of nought ;—man's earthly dwelling
Speaks with a voice as clear—"Prepare to die."

Look on the face of Nature widely lying,
Bound fast by Winter's hand, and cheerless now ;
So late with verdure clad, while soft gales sighing,
Shook dewy fragrance o'er her flowery brow.

No feathery songster glad his soft notes trilling,
Fills the light air with sounds of joy and love ;
Nor gentle showers from fleecy clouds distilling,
Spread the gay smile on earth that glows above.

The year has found its grave, and cold is sleeping
Beneath its shroud of newly fallen snow ;
While the bright moon her holy vigils keeping,
Shows desolation's hand on all below.

But in her ample bosom safe reposing,
Nature, the latent blossom kindly hides ;
Till the glad voice of Spring each germ disclosing,
Awakes new charms, and clothes the mountain's sides.

Shall man, this lesson in his folly slighting,
No wiser grow for all his Maker's care ?
Shall Nature's voice or Holy Spirit's writing
Less powerful prove than the false world's poor snare ?

Himself a child of earth for ever owning,
Shall He as if immortal dare to live ?
Shall age itself beneath its burthen groaning,
Forget the great account it soon must give ?

Alas ! we talk, we think of others dying,
And blame the folly which so plain appears ;
While faster round our hearts our chains entwining,
We give them moments, for ourselves take years.

We buy and build ; with fruitless care tormenting
The days for wisdom meant, and growth in grace ;
We toil, we schemes project, nor e'er relenting,
View on what fragile grounds our hopes we base.

But pause, and hear the awful voice appealing
Alike to all our hopes, to all our fears ;
"Set now thy house in order," lest death sealing,
Unthought by thee, thy doom, cut short thy years.

Almighty goodness grants thee now the seeing
Another year to its completion brought ;
But who shall tell before another's fleeing
What awful change may in thy state be wrought !

So live thou that in death when thou art sinking,
Sure hope in Christ may thy safe anchor prove ;
So die, thy Saviour's holy comfort drinking—
He may receive thy soul to endless love.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah xli. *Evening Lesson*, Isaiah xliii.

THE same Collect, Epistle and Gospel are appointed for this Sunday as the last.

The proper lessons show the folly of idolatry; and with many expostulations, the Almighty, in his own person, urges his chosen people to turn from lying vanities to serve the living God. In order to encourage them to return to their duty, the most gracious promises of mercy are held out to them; then passing from them to the rest of the world, the calling in of the Gentiles is announced, and the universality of his Church declared. It is well also to remember that the promises held out to the Jews are become ours through our adoption in Christ, and that the threatenings denounced against them for disobedience, affect in like manner ourselves.

ISAIAH xli. 10.

*"Fear thou not ; for I am with thee ; be not dismayed, for I
am thy God."*

WHY sinks my soul with care oppressed ?
Why heave I thus the heavy sigh ?
Oh ! hush thy sorrows all to rest,
And raise from earth thy languid eye.
What if the world be full of woe,
And thou, poor heart, hast had thy share ;
Though smarting still beneath the blow,
The Christian heart repels despair.

Thy Maker's precious words, oh ! hear,
And let thy troubles all be staid ;
"Fear not, for I, thy Lord, am near ;
I am thy God, be not dismayed.
And strength and help will I impart,
And with my right hand hold thee fast ;
Fear not, nor be thou faint of heart,
Thy first Redeemer, I, thy last.

But are these words addressed to me ?
May I the promise hold my own ?
Behold me, gracious Lord ! to thee
My weakness and my woes are known.
I would believe, yea, do believe ;
In thee would live, in thee would die ;

I love thee, while with shame I grieve
How far from thee and peace I fly.

Assist me, Lord, and let the thought
Of all this holy season brings :
Of all thy gentle love has wrought,
Rob worldly sorrow of its stings.
While all around me speaks of joy,
And Christian friends and brothers meet ;
Let no solicitude alloy,
The day, so holy and so sweet.

Where'er I cast my eyes, I see,
Remembrance dear to every breast ;—
The cedar, myrtle, holly tree,
And draw from them a promise blest.
The fir, the pine, the humble box,
Made holy by our Maker's word ;
Each memory's gentlest store unlocks,
And speaks a voice by few unheard.

The tender heart recalls times past,
When all, as one, in union met ;
And midst maturer joys will cast
A thought of fond yet sweet regret.
Loved forms will flit before our eyes
Of parents, kindred, now no more ;
And scenes of youth unbidden rise,
Of joys that time will ne'er restore.

But faith still dearer loves the green
Which sacred dome or house adorns ;
For holy pledge in these is seen
Of Him who wore the crown of thorns.
She shews, though winter reigns around,
Her Lord has brought eternal spring ;
That those who in his Church are found
Shall in continual verdure sing.

Amidst a desert drear and dread
As this cold earth must ever be,
Such evergreens in verdure spread
With holy joy the Church shall see.
Faith owns a token too that death
Dooms not such plants of Christ to die ;
Though hid in earth, His genial breath
Clothes them with immortality.

She reads the universal reign
Which our Redeemer yet must have,
When earth shall Eden be again,
And all shall own His power to save.
The spiritual desert then
The noblest plants shall rich display ;
Our God shall dwell once more with men,
His presence be eternal day.

Then welcome holy boughs ; still deck
With festive leaves our Church, our home :

Speak ye of joys no storm shall wreck,
Of happier dwelling yet to come.
Of all the Christian loves, the saint,—
Of God, of hope, of sins forgiven,—
Of realms which faith delights to paint,—
Of everlasting bliss in heaven.

THE CIRCUMCISION.

Morning Lessons, Gen. xvii. *Evening Lessons*, Deut. x. 12.

Romans ii.

Coloss. ii.

Epistle, Romans iv. 8.

Gospel, St. Luke ii. 15.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who madest Thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; Grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit; that, our hearts, and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey Thy blessed will; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

He that knew no sin was made sin for us, and became in all things obedient to the law for our sakes; and for this reason, which ought to be impressed in the most lively manner on our mind and heart,—that, whilst in all respects he should bear the pain of the sufferings to which he voluntarily submitted, we might enjoy the advantages arising from them. On this day, therefore, in conformity with the law, he began to bleed for us, proving himself to be truly man, (being God at the same time,) and that he came to bear the mark and punishment of our offences. That we may indeed profit by what he has endured for us, we must use the most strenuous

exertions to acquire the true circumcision of the Spirit by entering into the full meaning and temper of the excellent Collect appointed for that day.

The Epistle clearly illustrates the true design and mystery of the rite of circumcision, viz. the cutting off and casting away sin, and consecrating our souls and bodies in purity to God. The Gospel leads us immediately to our Divine Saviour as the only means of enabling us to accomplish this great end. It should be remembered that circumcision answers to our baptism, in both of which rites the parties are admitted into covenant with God, and in consequence are distinguished by a new name to mark that service. Our Lord received that of Jesus—Saviour,—and it was one of peculiar import and meaning. “In this adorable name,” to use the words of an excellent prelate,* “all the mysteries of wisdom and knowledge, all the treasures of grace and saving virtue are laid up, with the conquest of sin and death.” Hence it is that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.”

The Proper Lessons, morning and evening, give us an account both of the letter and spirit of circumcision; the first, with the command shewing the Jew the spiritual import of it, and the latter pointing out that its perpetual obligation is increased rather than diminished by the grace of the Gospel.

* Jolly.

ST. LUKE ii. 21.

*And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcision of
the child, his name was called Jesus.*

THEY err who think our Saviour's pains
With the last direful week began :
From the first hour that saw him man
He suffered for our guilty stains.

With grief acquaint, a man of woes,
E'en from the cradle to the tomb,
A life of sorrow his, and gloom ;
His last sad plaint was but the close.

At first a naked child exposed
To wants his creatures rarely feel ;
Next bleeding from the painful steel,
His plaintive cries the smart disclosed.

Jesus, our Saviour, name adored,
Pledge of our peace, thou sinner's stay,
Whom all in earth and heaven obey,
By demons feared, acknowledged Lord.

Well at thy name may every knee
In holy adoration bow ;
Of things above, of things below,
Through time, and all eternity.

And glad the faithful servant sees
Such veneration duly paid ;
He holds the outward gesture made
With inward reverence agrees.

But love we not on woe to dwell,
And cloudless would the mercy share ;
Nor wish to think why he should bear
The wrath of Heaven, the rage of Hell.

Selfish amidst e'en holy joy,
We reck not our redemption's cost ;
We know without Christ we were lost,
And more our pleasure might destroy.

Lord, teach us better to discern
What thou hast done,—what we must do ;
Nor let thy Holy Spirit woo,
And we refuse to hear, to learn.

Assist us that thy precious blood
May not for us in vain be shed ;
This taunt remove—"Your Lord has bled,
And ye his sufferings have withstood."

This day another year begins,
Then grant that it begin with thee ;
From every folly set us free,
And help us to forsake our sins.

Thy hand sustained us through the last,
And various have thy mercies been ;
Or known to us, or quite unseen,
Thou hast in safety held us fast.

An unknown path before us lies,
But whether weal or woe betide,
Be thou our best, our surest guide,
The surer, as time swifter flies.

Thy hand will clothe the leafless bowers ;
The fields, the groves, will smile again ;
But who shall tell if not in vain
For us may smile those fields, those flowers?

Perhaps for office sad they bloom ;
Some tender hand and aching breast
May those select we loved the best,
To wither with us in the tomb.

And be it so, if such thy will,
"Our times" are thine—we own the right—
Secure in thine, our Saviour's might,
We lean upon thy mercy still.

THE EPIPHANY.

Morning Lessons, Isaiah lx. *Evening Lessons*, Isaiah lxi.

St. Luke xxxi. 23. St. John ii. 1—12.

Epistle, Ephesians iii. 1. *Gospel*, St. Matt. ii. 1.

COLLECT.

O God, who by the leading of a star didst manifest Thy only begotten Son to the Gentiles; mercifully grant, that we, which know Thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of Thy glorious Godhead; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This great day witnessed the fulfilment of the prophecy that Christ should be "a light to lighten the Gentiles;" for, as the word Epiphany signifies, we commemorate his manifestation to them in the persons of the Magi, or wise men of the East. It had pleased God hitherto to confine the knowledge of himself to his chosen people, Israel; but when Christ, the desire of all nations, was born, the whole human race without distinction were to become partakers of the benefits of his appearance. Accordingly the Jews, through the shepherds, were apprized of the birth of their Saviour and Messiah, by a direct

communication from the angels; the Gentiles, through the Magi, by a remarkable star.

It should be remembered that at the time of our Lord's birth there was a universal expectation of the appearance of an extraordinary personage who was to obtain universal dominion. The attention of all mankind, in consequence, was directed to this point. No sooner did the Magi, who were skilled in astronomy, behold this star, than they read in it the accomplishment of the anticipated event, and, influenced by the Holy Spirit to follow its guidance, they repaired to Jerusalem. Being directed to Bethlehem, (significantly the *house of bread*,) and having found the holy infant, they offered him royal gifts, emblematical, as they have always been considered, of the offerings which his creatures owe him, —pure love and charity, ardent devotion, and the mortification of our sinful appetites and passions.

The Church, in her offices for this day, celebrates Christ's manifestation in three different respects, but chiefly the manifestation to the wise men, the first fruits of the Gentiles, of whom it should be remarked that they were the descendants of faithful Abraham, and were, therefore, mercifully selected for this honour.

The Gospel commemorates this great event, the Epistle pointing out the riches of its grace, while the Collect, acknowledging our guiding star to Christ to be faith, prays that we may hereafter behold what we now believe, and be admitted into the presence

of Him whom we acknowledge to be God in three persons—the ever-blessed Trinity.

The two other manifestations in which Christ declared his glory, are those of the holy Trinity at his baptism, called the Theophany, and the miraculous change of the water into wine at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, which bears the title of the Bethphany, or manifestation in the house. The Epiphany is commemorated by our Church in the Gospel, the Theophany in the Second Lesson for the morning, and the Bethphany in the Second Lesson for the evening.

The Lessons are so plain, and bear so clearly on the great blessing of the day, that they can neither be misunderstood, nor, it is to be hoped, can fail of affecting any heart which is in the least sensible of the mercies which we are called so richly to enjoy.

ST. MATTHEW ii. 10.

"When they saw the star they rejoiced with great gladness."

We lay in gross darkness, we knew not the light,
Our deeds were so evil they shamed e'en the night;
In blood and in cruelty swift were our feet,
To vengeance we ran as the wild courser fleet.

To demons we offered the service of God,
The land was defiled, and polluted the sod;—
The wailing of infants affrighted the air,
Groan answered to groan—the wild shriek told despair.

In the blood of a brother our hands we imbrued,
No right was respected, each passion was rude;
Unchaste and unholy no fetter could bind,
The tyrant of woman—the scourge of our kind.

The father that cherished us sank from our blow,
The mother that bare us was left to her woe;
When in age and in weakness they needed most care,
And Nature's own voice should have aided their prayer.

All hating and hateful we lived but for self,
Our pride was our idol, our god was our pelf;
And in crimes that to mention would clothe us with shame,
In our baseness we glorying, gave them to fame.

Presuming on science, in error we strayed,
And deeper the darkness that clouded us made.
Thus blinded by folly, self-righteous and wise,
We turned knowledge to sin, and our glory to lies.

To the stock or the stone guilty homage we paid,
Found gods in the fountain, the grove, or the glade;
Nor sunk yet enough into folly and sin,
We worshipped the errors that Hell could but win.

The God that we knew not beheld us afar,
And lo! on our midnight arose a bright star;
To lead us to home, to our Father, and peace,
And cause all our wanderings, our sorrows to cease.

Our light is arisen, the Saviour of all—
Ye islands, ye nations attend to His call.
No longer the prodigal destined to roam,—
The Gentile may enter his long banished home.

See, low at the feet of that holy babe cast,
The mighty, the learned, have found him at last;
Desire of all nations, their priest and their king,
Him promised of old who salvation should bring.

His meanness and poverty staggered them not,
The finger of Heaven had pointed the spot.—
The joy that they feel is the joy of a world,
Beholding the banner of mercy unfurled.

Break forth into singing, ye far distant isles,
Hell's fetters are broken, exposed are its wiles ;—
Joint heirs now with Christ, and the children of light,
Our God has restored us, and banished our night.

Bring offerings of righteousness, mercy, and truth,
The ripe fruits of age and the promise of youth ;
And warm be the prayer that the spirit of love,
On Judah may dawn and her darkness remove.

That one fold and one Shepherd, one kingdom of peace,
May embrace every nation—each captive release ;
Clothe earth once again, as in Eden she bloomed,
And blot out for ever what justice had doomed.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah xliv. *Epistle*, Romans xii. 1.

Evening Lesson, Isaiah xlv. *Gospel*, St. Luke ii. 41.

COLLECT.

O LORD, we beseech Thee mercifully to receive the prayers of Thy people which call upon Thee ; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The number of the Sundays after Epiphany are yearly more or fewer according as Easter is earlier or later. The twelfth chapter of Romans is divided into three parts, and read the three first Sundays. In this chapter, the Apostle, having formerly exhibited the appalling state of morals in the Gentile world before their conversion to Christianity, now proceeds to draw the practical inferences from the doctrine of their calling and election upon the rejection of the Jews for their disobedience. The Church has made choice of this chapter to shew that, having been called out of darkness, we must walk in light ; good

works, in fact, must follow faith, and be inseparably connected with it.

The Collect, in accordance with the Apostle's reasoning, beseeches the Almighty to accept our prayers, to grant us the power to discern our duty, and grace to fulfil it, for His sake, who, by His manifestation to the Gentiles, made known that to them also, was given the blessed privilege of approaching God by Him in prayer.

The chief Christian graces enforced by the Epistle are purity and humility, in which the Gentiles had been lamentably deficient; without these, however, we are neither capable of drawing near to God, nor of deriving benefit from any outward act of religion whatever.

The Gospel presents to our meditation the first beautiful trait of our Lord's eagerness to perform the will of His heavenly Father. It was customary among the Jews to present their children in the temple at the age of twelve years, when it was considered that they were old enough to comprehend, and therefore to take upon themselves the duties of that covenant into which they were entered by circumcision. It was usual for the doctors to give their attendance in an apartment belonging to the temple, for the purpose of examining and instructing the young persons who were brought to them. The doctors sat on elevated seats round about, the children below them in the middle space; and hence it was that our blessed Lord is said to have been found

“sitting in the midst of the doctors.” By selecting this portion of Scripture for her first Sunday after the Epiphany, the Church, amidst other considerations, would intimate to us, that it is in her bosom, and from the appointed ministers of Christ, that her members should come for instruction, and make the service of Christ from early youth their delight and study.

The Proper Lessons warn us most forcibly against idolatry; not indeed against the senseless worship of stocks and stones, but from a worship equally hateful to God and ensnaring to ourselves,—that of the world and its allurements, covetousness, luxury and ambition.

ST. LUKE ii. 51.

*And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was
subject unto them.*

AND did my gentle Saviour then
To earthly parents willingly submit ?
He, fairer than the sons of men,
In bonds of kindred was his bosom knit ?

Did he, who owns celestial state,
Who rules the nations with an iron rod ?
Did he upon those parents wait,
Who held their breath alone from him, their God ?

Lord, only thou perfection wert,
Thy meek example for our pattern shines ;
The holy penmen but insert
Such gracious acts as love with power combines.

Not for thyself, O Lord, but us,
Didst thou such meekness condescend to shew,
That in submissive duty thus,
We pay to others the respect we owe.

Reader ! if e'er thy stubborn will
Against thy parents has been proudly set ;
If thou hast wrung their hearts until
With scalding tears their pallid cheeks were wet ;

If, priding thee on greater sense,
On deeper knowledge, or more noble frame,
Thou treatest with indifference,
Those who thy reverential service claim,

With shame thy Saviour's conduct view,
And dread the stern rebuke thou shalt receive ;
For in that dreadful day thou 'lt rue
The base ingratitude that bade them grieve.

Yea, e'er that hour perhaps thou 'lt reap
The bitter consequence of thy mistake ;
Go mark that slumber long and deep,—
Thou 'lt know what pangs the sternest heart can shake.

It is a trying sight at best
To see a parent bound in death's cold thralls ;
How many a thought long laid at rest,
How many a scene of youth that sight recalls !

What proofs of love that once was all
Our world of happiness spring fresh to mind ;
Alas ! the coffin and the pall
The deep recesses of our memory find.

But if one disobedient deed,
If one unkind expression rise to thought—
How doth the heart in anguish bleed !
How bootless the excuse by self-love taught !

Too late repentant tears are shed
To wash unkindness from a parent's bier ;
A voice will whisper from the dead
That wrings the heart, but enters not the ear.

Spare then thyself the bitter pang,
The keen reproach whilst yet within thy power ;
No wound like that from conscience fang,—
Ne'er sharper will it pierce than in that hour.

But not alone in earthly ties
Grant us the grace, O Lord, to copy thee ;
Let sense of higher duty rise
To tame down passion with humility.

Help us to imitate thy zeal,
And in our " Father's business" to be found ;
Our earliest pleasure make us feel
To seek instruction meet on holy ground.

And to the Church, as justly due,
Our holy mother by thyself made pure ;
Still pondering in her bosom true
Thy words, thy promise she shall e'er endure ;

Teach us in reverence meek to bow,
To seek the nourishment which she bestows ;
That dutiful as children now,
We share her triumphs o'er thy latest foes.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah li. *Epistle*, Rom. xii. 6.

Evening Lesson, Isaiah liii. *Gospel*, St. John ii. 1.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth; mercifully hear the supplications of Thy people, and grant us Thy peace all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Of all terrestrial blessings, that of peace is the greatest; and true peace can spring only from a pure conscience: "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." In the Collect for last Sunday we implored the light of truth; in the present, acknowledging that the government of all things, both in heaven and earth, belongs to God, we pray for the same light that it may guide our steps into those paths which can alone ensure us peace unto our life's end.

The Epistle inculcates clearly and forcibly the duty of cultivating this holy and blessed peace, pointing out by the practice of the precepts which it lays down, the only way that can lead to its acquire-

ment. The careful improvements of the gifts bestowed upon us by the Almighty, the duty here recommended by the Apostle, has not only a necessary and direct tendency to promote our own happiness, but the welfare of the whole community, by insuring tranquillity and union among all ranks.

The Gospel relates the first miracle of our Lord, the turning of water into wine at the marriage feast at Cana, serving by this wonderful manifestation of His glory, to strengthen our firm belief in Him who is the Author of our salvation; while, at the same time, it is in accordance with that spirit which the Epistle inculcates. The blessing arising from mutual love and harmony, is best shown in the holy estate of matrimony, which being instituted by God whilst man was yet innocent, retains its original purity, promising happiness, here and hereafter, if the presence and benediction of the Lord be sought.

The Proper Lessons treat of Christ and the benefits and blessings of our redemption, and the goodness of God. The Evening Lesson, which is the celebrated fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, requires no comment. We can but read it with the most profound sentiments of awe, and of grateful astonishment. They, in fact, who can resist the evidence it contains, that Jesus is the true Messiah, must so have hardened themselves against conviction, that no argument, no sign, no miracle, unless by the special mercy of God, could have the slightest effect in removing their infidelity.

ISAIAH li. 11.

*Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with
singing to Zion.*

AWAKE, awake ! thou city in the dust ;
 Thou victim of thine own, thy foes' fierce lust ;
 Afflicted of the Lord, and sunk in woe,
 Midst streams of blood that from thy children flow !
 Who, from the hand of God the wrathful cup,
 E'en to the very dregs hath swallowed up.
 Thou drunken of the Lord, but not with wine,
 Arise, arise, and let thy glory shine ;
 Thy God, the cup of trembling, lo ! hath ta'en
 From out thy hand ; nor shalt thou taste again
 The dregs of his fierce fury ; nor shall lie
 The taunt and byword of the passer by ;
 Thy foes henceforth the potion dread shall drink—
 The Lord hath spoken it, and will not shrink.

Awake, awake ! put on thy strength, O arm,
 Mighty to save in battle's wild alarm ;
 Awake as in the ancient days, when thou
 Didst Egypt's pride beneath the red waves bow,—
 Badst the sea's roaring waters stand on heap,
 That thou mightst lead thy people e'en as sheep,
 Through crystal battlements of awful height,
 Guiding their footsteps with thy pillar bright.

Return, ye God's redeemed, with songs of joy,
Shout, for thy God will never more destroy,—
Eternal peace shall be upon thy head,
The quickening dews of life revive thy dead.
Sing to the Lord, let every tongue proclaim—
“Our God is come—salvation is his name!
Hear it, ye isles, his righteousness is near,
To you, to you his glory shall appear.
His arms shall judge the people of the land,
All eyes shall wait on him, ask his command,
In him shall Israel, shall the Gentile trust,
Our God shall reign, his foes shall lick the dust.”

And we have seen the day-star rise on high,
Led by its brightness have beheld him nigh,—
Have seen his kingdom wide extend its sway,
The Demon altars groan, the proud give way,—
Have seen the Heathen lift in faith, his hand—
The Saviour's name conveyed from land to land.
Nor of that promise ought shall be forgot—
God is not man, that he remembers not.
But, oh! if thus admitted to his light,
How should we cleanse our souls before his sight?
If he our darkness has in love dispersed,
And our benighted minds in knowledge nursed,
How may our deeds of darkness yet partake?
How dare we boast his name, yet not forsake
The gross idolatry that woke his ire,
And make the world, its wealth, our sole desire?

Commit what ignorance cannot e'en excuse,
 And, Pagan-like, obedience refuse ?
 No, rather let us seek his Spirit's aid,
 To make those graces ours which he displayed—
 That living, we, his saving truth may spread,
 And at our death may joyful there be led,
 Where neither light of sun or moon is known,
 Where Christ, the Lamb of God, is light alone.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah lv. *Epistle*, Rom. xii. 16.

Evening Lesson, Isaiah lvi. *Gospel*, Matt. viii. 1.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth Thy right hand to help and defend us ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

It is the property of light to reveal those dangers which darkness concealed from us, but which were not the less formidable because we were ignorant of their existence. Thus when spiritual darkness enveloped us, we heedlessly walked in paths which led to destruction, committing sins which the enlightened conscience condemns ; but when the rays of truth shone upon our minds, we beheld ourselves set in the midst of many and great dangers, and a sense of infirmity and of humility was the consequence. The Collect expresses this conviction, and leads us at once to that Almighty and everlasting God, who alone can assist and protect us.

The Epistle, continuing to direct us in the way of peace, enforces upon us that love or charity which

exercises itself towards our enemies as well as our friends,—the fruits of that peace which the angels proclaimed, and to the cultivation of which the example of our blessed Lord so strongly excites us.

Having acknowledged our infirmities in the Collect, and sought for aid from Him who alone can give it, we are led in the Gospel to the divine Physician of souls, and are taught that He who healed the leper, and the afflicted with the palsy, is both able and willing, on our coming to Him in faith and humility, to heal the more deadly disease of sin.

In the Proper Lessons the same tender compassion and mercy towards the fainting and thirsty penitent is exhibited, Christ himself inviting us to come to Him under promises of refreshment. The Evening Lesson, prescribing the conditions of salvation about to be revealed, points out the accession of the Gentiles to the Church, and their full participation of all the blessings and privileges which had ever been promised to the chosen people, Christ having made his Church the “house of prayer for all nations.”

ST. MATTHEW, viii. 2.

*And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying,
"Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."*

YES! earth is beautiful!

Turn where we may to gaze upon her breast,
Or clothed in winter garb, or summer's vest.

The blooming flowers we cull,
The verdant fields, rich boughs, or waving corn,
The hoary sparkling frost, or leafless thorn,

The gale that gently sighs,
Or the rude wind upheaving ocean's bed,
The gushing stream by upland torrent fed,
Mild autumn's varied dyes,
Spring's garb of tender green,—the pure white snow,
The mountain's frowning head, or vale below,

All, all in turn delight.
Our God hath made them good, nor have we lost,
In that proud knowledge which our Eden cost,
The power to read aright
The humbling lesson which they all convey,—
"We our first service keep—men only stray."

Who, knowing his own heart,
Finds not deep cause to hide his face and weep ;
And e'er the more as conscience less may sleep,
And false deceitful art
Has less the power to blind him to the truth,
And frame excuse from age, or thoughtless youth.

Not actual sin alone,
Not gross and heavy crimes against us writ,
Which spectre-like in our remembrance flit,
Must cause the heavy groan ;
There is an inward, an inherent taint,
Which wrings less holy breasts, and shames the saint.

The heart itself is foul ;
Sin hath so twined its fibres o'er each fold,
That its best energies are faint and cold,
Unworthy of a soul
Immortal made, and by a God redeemed,
Made capable of bliss when lost he seemed.

Yet none doth truly know,
Save we ourselves, the torment of our breast ;
Too often when by partial friends caressed,
And praises warmly flow,
An inward hand such characters will write,
We turn aside, and sicken at the sight.

For fair we oft are seen,
And fair the reputation that we hold,
Yet oh ! what agony may lurk untold,
Beneath that false serene,
For God delights the perfect heart to see,
And we have cause to loathe our leprosy.

Saviour ! whose simple word,
The sick man's body healed from legal taint,
A greater cure perform on our weak souls and faint,
And let the prayer be heard,
Which lowly at thy feet with anguish keen,
We offer to thy love and say—" Be clean."

No deeds of ours are pure,—
All stained with pride, or else in motive weak,
And each such imperfection doth bespeak,
That when we seem secure
In other eyes of pardon and a crown,
Doubts in ourselves such fond confidings drown.

Yet sweet it is to think,
Mourn as we may unworthiness so great,
Not man's decree but Thine decides our fate :
He cannot see the link
That leads us oft astray against our will,
And prone himself to wrong, condemns us still.

Mercy and love are thine !

Thou knowest our weakness, knowest each guilty stain,
Knowest too how earnest, though how oft in vain,

We seek thy will divine

To make the rule of our poor erring heart,—
Thou injured most, most comfort dost impart.

Make us thine own indeed,

Spotted with leprous stain as we confess ;
Open the fountain of thy blood and bless

Our spirits in their need :

Thy blood alone can cleanse our sinful soul,
Thou, Lord, alone canst make each leper whole.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah lvii. *Epistle*, Rom. xiii. 1.

Evening Lesson, Isaiah lviii. *Gospel*, St. Matt. viii. 23.

COLLECT.

O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright ; Grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

That man is by nature weak and corrupt, and that all help in time of need cometh from God, no one, in the least acquainted with himself, will deny. The Church, in full acknowledgment of the humiliating truth, teaches us to implore in the Collect for this Sunday, that strength and protection which can alone enable us to rise above temptation, and thus to conquer him who is our mortal enemy, the Prince of Darkness. It was to destroy the power of Satan and to rescue us from his bondage, that our blessed Lord was manifested. As his disciples, therefore, we must walk in the path which he has shewn us, and avoid those sins especially by which our adversary himself fell, and which he

uses to work our ruin. Pride,—the sin of hell,—and distrust of God's word, by spreading rebellion, introduced disorder and misery into the world, and will continue to do so wherever this root of bitterness exists. The Epistle, therefore, earnestly, enforces subjection to every rightful power, making the ground of obedience and lawful authority, obedience to the command of God himself, that so fulfilling the allotted duties of our station with submission, patience and diligence, we may lead a peaceable and godly life.

The Gospel, by bringing to our consideration the power of our Lord exhibited in calming the tempest at sea, and afterwards subduing the fury of the possessed on land, shews us that He is omnipotent, and, therefore, able to assist us in our direst necessity, if with faith and humility we apply to Him, to still the madness of our own passions, or check the violence of others.

The Proper Lessons are in union with the rest of the service of the day. They declare that there is no peace for the wicked, who, by a bold and beautiful figure, are said to be “like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.”

ST. MATTHEW VIII. 24.

And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves ; but he was asleep.

How smooth the vessel glides !
 The light breeze scarcely fills her sails,
 And gurgling by her sides
 The gently swelling billow fails
 To raise one snowy crest as to defy
 Her progress o'er its breast.
 The restless sea woos rest,
 And in repose at length, doth calmly lie.

Who that beheld it now
 Would think what terrors it can shew,—
 Would think that level prow
 Could plunge into the depths below ;
 And now be lifted to the frowning skies,
 With sail and rudder lost,
 On waves so wildly toss'd,
 That the poor seaman's heart within him dies.

Awed by its mighty throes
 Behold those mariners aghast,
 While He, the Man of woes,
 Lies sleeping heedless of the blast,

And of the tempest roaring in its strife ;
 Weary and spent, his frame
 Needful repose doth claim ;
Those eyes are closed whose glance is other's life.

 Approach with holy awe ;
Heedless presume not thou to gaze :
 Angels alone may draw
 Near him who yet hath veil'd his rays
Under the garb of poor humanity.
 And they with wings o'erlaid
 Their faces meekly shade
Unable to endure his majesty.

 Thy God is sleeping there,
For thee that form fatigued and mean ;
 Thy grief, thy guilt, thy care
 Have weigh'd him down ; yet how serene
That pallid brow ! Man's coward heart within
 To Heaven for succour cries,
 E'en under cloudless skies ;
But Christ is pure, and man is steep'd in sin.

 As yet they know him not—
But wild with terror and dismay
 They hasten to the spot
Where he their holy Master lay,

And with a cry they rouse him from his sleep :

“Awake! thy servants save!

Behold a watery grave

Is yawning for us in the eternal deep.”

And they reproach their Lord,

As though his care could slumber too ;

Unknowing what was stored

In him to whom thus prompt they flew.

With mild rebuke he bade the sea “be still,”

And swift the foaming waves

Sank awed within their caves

In quick submission to his mighty will.

Their Master stood reveal'd,

And lowly worship at his feet they paid ;

That deed belief hath seal'd,

And shew'd the Lord who seas had made.

And sail we not with him in holy bark ?

And when dark tempests low'r,

Is not his word the pow'r

That soothes the troubled waves and guides his ark ?

And yet how oft we think,

When danger presses near, he sleeps ;

Or, standing on woe's brink,

That he perchance no longer keeps

A watchful eye, nor will he rise and check
 The griefs that on us press;
 Complain he loves us less,
 And cares not if we perish in the wreck.

 Must we at once be heard
 If we but raise a single cry ?
 And must it be inferred
 That if he pause, he will deny ?
 O, ye of little faith ! forbear and trust—
 He only knows the hour
 When to exert his power,
 For He is wise as merciful and just.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah lix. *Epistle*, Coloss. iii. 12.

Evening Lesson, Isaiah lxiv. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xiii. 24.

COLLECT.

O LORD, we beseech Thee to keep Thy Church and household continually in Thy true religion ; that they who do lean only upon the hope of Thy heavenly grace may evermore be defended by Thy mighty power ; through Jesus-Christ our Lord. Amen.

The welfare of the Church is the welfare of every individual that composes it : rightly therefore do we pray in the Collect that it may be defended by Him who is the Head of the Church, and kept and guided by the influence of His Holy Spirit. As one great means to this desirable end, the Epistle again inculcates the duty of maintaining peace, and of preserving unbroken the bond of union which should exist between the members of one body.

In the Gospel we are shown under another emblem,—that of the mixture of the tares among the wheat sown by the enemy of God and man,—the danger that menaces us as a Church, and the malice of that wicked one, whose delight it is to sow con-

fusion and mischief where order and harmony alone should appear. As Christ, however, in a former instance, stilled the raging of the sea and the frenzy of the demoniac, so in the present we are taught that no evil can be introduced into the Church, of which he has not perfect cognizance; that with wisdom not to be deceived, He distinguishes between the good and evil members of it, and that, in due time, He will make that public division between them, which, at present, for wise and merciful purposes, He sees proper to delay.

The degenerate and disordered state of the Jewish Church, the effect of the malice of Satan, is represented with much feeling in the Morning Lesson. In that for the Evening, the Church expresses her longing desire for deliverance, for all the blessings of redemption, and for that last and glorious appearance of her God and Saviour when He shall come to make complete restitution of all things.

ISAIAH lxiv. 4.

Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

We often think it hard to toil
Throughout the day, and wish the soil,
The various arts of human kind,
Each deeper science of the mind,
Would yield their fruits with less of care,
Or of themselves their stores prepare :
Alas ! we quite forget that rest
By previous labour only can be bless'd.

None know the joy of Sabbath day
Like those who rise with earliest ray,
Nor till the ev'ning sun declines,
And shadows fall in lengthen'd lines,
May quit the crowded roof, the field,
And seek the peace repose can yield ;
None hail like these the holy morn,
When Sabbath bells the gathering hamlet warn.

The Christian's path, where'er he turns,
Alas ! is thickly set with thorns ;
Trials without and foes within,
His own, and oft another's sin ;

'The constant warfare in his breast,
To own what is, is for the best,
By turns disturb the bliss of peace,
And make the prospect sweet of glad release.

The joys man knows are all alloyed,
The fairest oft the first destroy'd ;
The canker worm is in the bud
Of all his heart pronounces good ;
All in possession quickly fade,
The stamp of change on each is laid,
And when he most would make earth home,
Sharp pangs admonish him he doth but roam.

And though he wear a placid mien,
And all within his breast serene,
He owns the calm, the fruit of strife,
Which each must wage who seek for life.
For he who takes his Master's cross,
Must, like that Master, bear the loss
Of present ease, and yield his will,
Content, for God, to toil and suffer still.

But oh ! the joy to faithful breast,
To know there is a place of rest,
More bright than eye hath ever seen,
More blest than earth hath ever been ;

Which sees no tear, which hears no groan,—
Where lasting joy is found alone ;
For joy in heav'n, unlike this earth,
Survives the blissful sigh that marks its birth. .

Yet often does this blessed thought
Pass o'er the mind when most unsought,
Diffusing sweetness o'er each sense,
As, heaven-born, it had brought from thence
Some portion of celestial bliss,
Which spirits of a world like this
Can only taste for briefest space,
Yet serving oft to cheer them in their race.

Methinks 'twere happiness to rise
From bed of death to brightest skies ;
To change the gloom of dying bed,
For light by God's own presence fed ;
To quit this languid, helpless frame,
And a freed spirit's vigour claim,—
Pain, darkness, anguish leave below,
And catch the sounds from angels' lips that flow.

What rapt'rous strains of joy must burst,
From the delighted soul, when first
It feels its freedom, and essays
Its new-born pow'rs, and soars mid rays

Which brighter grow as it ascends ;
While breath of heavenly fragrance blends
Fresh odours with delight, and grants
New strength to reach those realms for which it pants.

Then cease we longer to complain ;
We toil indeed, but not in vain,
And as our zeal shall warmer grow,
More joy hereafter we shall know :
Our heaviest labours then will seem
The passing throes of fev'rish dream,
Or if in thought allowed to rest,
'Twill only be to render bliss more blest.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

Morning Lesson, Isaiah lxv. *Epistle*, 1 St. John iii. 1.
Evening Lesson, Isaiah lxvi. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xxiv. 23.

COLLECT.

O God, whose blessed Son was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life; Grant us, we beseech Thee, that having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as He is pure; that when He shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom, where with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, He liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

It rarely happens that the beautiful Collect for this Sunday, which was added at the last review of the Liturgy in 1661, is used in public; but there is not one that may be used with greater propriety and advantage in private.

Having stated the great end of Christ's manifestation in the world,—to destroy the works of the devil, and to restore us to the relationship to God which disobedience had forfeited,—it implores that grace

which can alone enable us to purify ourselves as the indispensable qualification of eternal felicity; and concludes with a declaration of belief in the re-appearance of our Almighty Redeemer to judge the world, and of his consequent everlasting covenant.

The Epistle is in such close harmony with the Collect, that it may be considered as an amplification, in a peculiarly affecting and beautiful style, of it; while the Gospel proceeds to a display of that awful hour, when, at the sound of the trumpet, the whole race of mankind shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

The Proper Lessons, which conclude those of Isaiah, shew, in language the most sublime and impressive, the calling-in of the Gentiles, the rejection and subsequent restoration of the Jews, and finally, the universality of Christ's kingdom, when all things being accomplished which had been willed in the eternal counsels of God, a new earth and a new heaven of everlasting duration, exceeding the beauty of the former, shall be created.

ISAIAH lxvi. 1.

Thus saith the Lord: The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye build for me? and where is the place of my rest?

THOUGH not in temples human made
Can God, the everlasting, be confined,—
Though not the outstretched sky o'erlaid
With glittering stars his glorious steps can bind,—
Though highest heaven he makes his throne,
His footstool only this, our earth below,
Yet will he not refuse to own
The dome where faith designs his name to shew.

Doubt not but he regards such work,
As erst, with favourable eyes, if nought
Of boastful piety shall lurk
Where his Almighty honour should be sought.
And truly 'tis a lovely sight
To see such sacred dwelling set apart
For his own use; one to delight,
And kindle zeal, e'en in the coldest heart.

As yet the voice of joy and praise
Has not awoke the echoes of those walls;
But now the organ's swell doth raise
Its lofty sounds, and joy each breast enthalls.

Sweet grateful tears on sudden start,
The presence of Almighty God is felt ;
And while that sense doth awe impart,
All rude sensations in devotion melt.

We feel that house, as now it is,
The place where he but waits to dwell ; we own
" The fullness of the earth is his,"
And his the compass of the world alone ;—
That he, whose hand, whose heart is clean,
May only there abide ; and joyful then
We bid those gates give way, unseen
That he may enter in, and dwell with men.

What tender thoughts our bosom fill,
As he, Christ's minister, pours forth the prayer,
That God may bless each office still,
Bless this our work, and all that work who share ;
Bless those who may hereafter seek
Entrance, or grace, or pardon, or repose,—
Times that of joy or sorrow speak,
The chequered scenes man's generation knows.

It is a scene of love, of peace,
Celestial hope, an image e'en of heaven,
Of that pure state when life shall cease,
The purer still as we have striven

Against the force of sin and woe,
Or felt the weariness of human care,
Or toil which respite might not know,
And tasted even here the bliss of prayer.

Yet is it earth, and perfect bliss,
E'en in that joyful throng may not be found :
Some forms revered perhaps we miss,
Whose zeal first raised that structure from the ground ;
Like David not allowed to see,
Although approved, completion of his will ;
But dear and hallowed memory
In all that meets our view, presents them still.

Some pensive drops perchance may fall ;
For sweet it is to stand in holy place
With those we love, nor can we call
Sufficient to our aid entirely to efface
The pain to feel ourselves alone.
We rise in thought to those bright realms where they,
We trust, adore before the throne,
And by affection urged desire to stay.

But ah ! how pure must they become
Who would the sacred courts of heaven ascend,
For God's own sons the promised home :
Vice may not there, as here, with virtue blend.

It doth not yet indeed appear
What they who claim that holy name shall be ;
But this great truth at least is clear,
They who desire it must from sin be free.

'Tis vain for heavenly bliss to sigh,
If we neglect what only Heaven can gain :
Made manifest that sin might die,
The Lord admits in none a wilful stain,
The Evil One hath felt his arm,
And grace is given to all who truly ask ;
Nor power in earth or hell can harm
Who, in his strength, performs th' allotted task.

Let no one, then, himself deceive,—
Who worketh righteousness alone is pure ;
The crown which Faith's own fingers weave
A life of purity must yet secure.
No sinful being may draw nigh
The Lamb of God, and claim the saints' pure lot ;
Beware we then the dread reply—
" Sinners, you plead in vain—I know you not !"

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Morning Lesson, Gen. i. *Epistle*, 1 Corinth. ix. 24.

Evening Lesson, Gen. ii. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xx. 1.

COLLECT.

O LORD, we beseech Thee favourably to hear the prayers of Thy people; that we, who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by Thy goodness, for the glory of Thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Hitherto the Church has celebrated the birth and manifestation of Christ; she now calls upon us to consider the end and design of his coming to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself: the season is therefore no longer one of rejoicing, but of humiliation and repentance.

The present Sunday is called Septuagesima Sunday, or, more properly speaking, the Sunday in Septuagesima, or seventy days before Easter. Originally forty days' fast were appointed as a preparation for that holy festival, but the term was lengthened, not that the season of penitence should be made

more severe, but that its rigour might be mitigated in consideration of weaker constitutions. The number forty was appointed by the Church in remembrance of the forty days in which the flood overspread the earth, of the forty years' wandering of the Israelites in the wilderness, of Moses' sojourn in the mount, and especially of our blessed Saviour's fast and temptation. These forty days of penance commence on Ash-Wednesday; the Sunday of each week being a festival, the number would be otherwise incomplete. In the course of time fifty days before Easter were fixed for the beginning of Lent, that a few days of refreshment might be obtained. The Sunday in that period was consequently called the Sunday in Quinquagesima, or Quinquagesima Sunday. Further indulgence being desired, sixty days were appointed, and hence Sexagesima Sunday. At length the number was finally limited to seventy, by which we may be reminded of the seventy years of captivity in Babylon,—the representative of confusion, idolatry, and sin. These three Sundays, therefore, may be considered as introductory to Lent, strictly so called, and should serve as a preparation for that holy season.

The Collect makes humble acknowledgment of God's justice in punishing our sins, and prays for a deliverance for the glory of His name. The Epistle, under the metaphor of the ancient games of the Athletæ, points out our Christian course, and exhorts us to use the necessary means of ab-

stinence and mortification, in order to run it successfully.

In the Gospel, under the parable of the householder hiring labourers to work in his vineyard, we are shown the work assigned us by the providence of God in His own vineyard, and reminded that an evening will also arrive to each, when our labours will be reviewed, and reward or punishment accorded.

The Proper Lessons take us back to the book of Genesis. There we behold the dignity and rank of man upon his original creation, the favour of his Maker towards him, and the happiness he enjoyed before sin had robbed him of his innocence, and of his title to a heavenly inheritance. The intent of this contemplation is to lead the mind to Him who has created us anew in His own image, and, by a work of love greater even than at first shown us, given us a surer and a holier title to eternal happiness.

GENESIS ii. 17.

In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Now Spring is returning, the heather is green,
And Nature awakens at length from her sleep ;
The dark clouds are vanished, the sky is serene,
And the rude waves are hushed on the breast of the deep.

The leaves are all budding, the primrose appears,
The call of the blackbird resounds from the grove ;
The bright beams of sunshine the gay meadow cheers,
And warms the chilled bosom of earth into love.

Yes, Nature rejoices, though cursed for man's sin,
Her season of sorrow and darkness is o'er ;
But her garments of gladness the Church must begin
To cast far aside, and past guilt to deplore.

She has sung for the joy of her Lord's holy birth,
For the bliss which his brightness convey'd to the isles ;
But now she must sorrow while joy clothes the earth
And for shame and for penitence change her glad smiles.

And, mark ! 'twas but late that all Nature seemed dead,
Though now she arises more bright from her tomb ;
A gayer existence o'er all things is shed,
While man, and man only, is cast into gloom.

The season which newly to Nature gives birth,
In sorrow and death speaks to man of his fall ;
That sentence, which fixed his sad doom upon earth,
'Tis as though the Almighty would bid him recall.

See age, which the storms of the winter had braved,
Sinks into the grave as the blossoms unfold :
And they over whom the cold snow-bough has waved,
Close their eyes midst the pleasures they longed to behold.

Oh ! let not the season so striking, in vain
Call the careless to thought, and the sinner to mourn—
Nor useless the Church raise her voice to restrain
The joy now misplaced, or her wanderers to turn.

For, who can behold this fair earth, and not grieve
For havoc so fatal, result so deplored ;
Nor lament for the Eden sin forced us to leave—
Or rejoice in the hope which our Lord has restored.

That our God should descend, his poor creatures to save
From ills which their own disobedience had wrought—
Should our nature assume, and his bed make the grave,
Is a mercy confessed that with mystery is fraught.

But shall we reject it because past our scope,
And finite can never infinity span—
Enamoured of woe shall we throw away hope,
Refuse from a God what we ask from a man ?

In pity forbid it, O Saviour! adored,
Endue us with wisdom the truth to discern—
Thine own holy grace on our spirits be poured,
That faith may direct us in meekness to learn.

Prepare Thou the season before us to use,
As penitent sinners may justly become ;
Nor careless thy offers of pardon abuse,
But eager as prodigals seeking their home.

Concealed in the bosom of ocean, the earth
Lay hid till thy mandate first bade her appear ;
Then clothed her with beauty, gave Nature her birth,
And marked with its seasons the life-giving year.

Ere long the deep waters swept over her breast,
And life so abundant was swallowed in death ;
And flames shall hereafter her fabric invest,
And all vanish away as man's own fleeting breath.

New Earth and new Heavens again shall thy word
Call forth from the wreck of a world passed away ;
When louder hosannahs than yet have been heard—
The joy of the saints to their Lord shall convey.

But sin that to ruin the former consigned,
May deprive us, alas ! of our birthright again ;—
Then help us, O Saviour ! in mercy, to find
That our faith and repentance have not been in vain.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Morning Lesson, Gen. iii. *Epistle*, 2 Cor. xi. 19.

Evening Lesson, Gen. vi. *Gospel*, St. Luke viii. 4.

COLLECT.

O LORD God, who seest that we put not our trust in anything that we do; mercifully grant that by Thy power we may be defended against all adversity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Disclaiming all presumptuous trust in ourselves, we pray in the Collect that Almighty God would, by His power, defend us from that Evil Spirit, who was our first instigator to sin, and who still prompts us to disobedience and iniquity.

The whole service of the day bears on the awful history recorded in the Morning Lesson: the fall of man through the malignity of Satan, as also on the redemption promised in the Messiah, the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head. Condemned now to toil for that happiness which was once in our possession, the Epistle propounds to us the example of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, thereby animating us to imitate his perseverance, unceasing labour and humility, even as he faith-

fully followed the steps of his blessed Lord and Master.

In the Gospel we are shewn in the parable of the Sower not only the different manner in which the seed of heavenly truth is received by men, but the true cause of this difference—the defectiveness of the soil into which it falls, and not of the seed itself; and are hence warned, so to prepare our hearts for its reception, that by the blessed influence of God's Holy Spirit, it may bring forth fruit to perfection.

The Evening Lesson is a melancholy record of the rapid growth of sin, and of its dreadful consequences in the destruction of all animated nature by the overflowing waters of the deluge, whereby we are reminded of a still more fatal catastrophe, the effect of universal depravity,—the destruction of the world itself by fire.

GENESIS iii. 23.

*Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of
Eden to till the ground.*

I LOVE thee beauteous earth !
Ne'er canst thou pall upon my sight. In mirth,
Or sadness still the same,
I love to gaze upon thy face, and claim
Companionship with thee :
To rid me of all worldly care, and flee
To silence, solitude and gentle thought,
At peace within myself, at enmity with nought :

To sit on mountain's slope
Watching the thin, white clouds that seem like hope
To veil each dusky side,
Making the danger greater it would hide ;
Or sailing light away
Leave the rich landscape clear, and bright display,
Fair fields and spreading trees, and gentle flocks,
Relieved by forest brown, and dark and stately rocks :

To watch the mighty sea
When peaceful laid its waves make melody,
The sparkling sunbeams play
On its wide breast, or on the frothy spray,

Making them bright as gems
That glitter on the stately diadems
Of proudest kings; and oh! I love to trace
The shadowy lines upon its wide and boundless face:

To see it in its rage
When winds and waves and frowning skies engage
In fierce and angry war;
Watch the huge billow as it rolls from far,
"Curling its monstrous head;"
Or parting wide its jaws, shew ocean's bed:
While pleased or scared the seamew wildly screams,
And her white silvery wing upon the darkness gleams:

To watch the star of day
Mounting his crimson car, dispute the sway
Of night, the elder born,
And spite of her resistance lead the morn;
While she her dewy tears
Throws in his way retiring, as she hears—
Proof of his victory,—the song of birds,
The stirring of the leaves, and the glad low of herds:

To watch night's silver queen
Breaking her way through thickest clouds, serene,
Ascend her throne on high,
Her court the starry glories of the sky:

To gaze upon her face
Till all terrestrial sentiments give place,
To thoughts of heavenly peace and holy love,
Of all that soothes on earth, of all hope points above.

Yes! there is joy in this,
Which those who never have enjoyed such bliss
Might even dare dispute.
Sorrow and care I've known, and pain acute,
Nor mean I to repine ;
'Twas just, 'twas meet, yet is this mercy mine—
A heart to feel all nature's charms, and still
To love and prize them more, as more I know God's skill.

And dear and holy all,
No eye that rests on each but must recall
Their great Creator's hand,
And read obedience to his first command.
Had our first sire obeyed
As these, then we his children had not strayed,—
Had been exempt from blighting sin and woe ;
Earth had not cause to mourn—a Saviour's blood to flow.

Each heart, like every soil,
Must thorns and thistles bear ; nor ceaseless toil
To clear the ground the worst,
The direst punishment that sin accurst

Has brought upon our race.
No labour may the rooted stamp efface,
Unprofitable servants at the best ;
Corruption's fatal taint will e'er our souls infest.

His holy blood alone,
The promised seed, condemned for man to groan,
Can cleanse from every stain,
Can punishment avert,—that love regain
Which proved man's sorest loss.
By all that thou hast done, thy painful cross,
Thy bitter sufferings, and undying love,
Grant, Lord, thy Spirit's aid—thy Father's wrath remove.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Morning Lesson, Gen. ix. to v. 20. *Epistle*, 1 Corinth. xiii. 1.
Evening Lesson, Gen. xii. *Gospel*, St. Luke xviii. 31.

COLLECT.

O LORD, who hast taught us, that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; send Thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee; Grant this for Thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

As humility was the ground-work of the two former Collects, so in its spirit does it form that of the present; for, as we cannot love God truly, without this divine virtue, so is it utterly impossible that we can really love our neighbour unless we be possessed of it. This frame of mind, however, is the especial gift of God, and therefore we are taught earnestly to pray for it in the Collect of this day; acknowledging its worth to be such in the eyes of God, that whosoever is without it, is counted dead before him. That we may fully comprehend the extent of the duty, and the true meaning of the term

charity, the portion of the Epistle has been selected in which its several obligations and marks are so clearly expressed, that he, who, after a careful perusal of it, remains ignorant of what is required of him, is wilfully in darkness. The Gospel represents to us our Lord on His way for the last time to Jerusalem, whither He was going as a lamb to the slaughter for our sakes; and it is admirably calculated to inspire us with thoughts proper for the mournful and penitential season now opening upon us.

The Morning Lesson is one of comfort and encouragement. As in a former, we trembled at the destruction of our race by the waters of the flood, and at the display of God's anger, in this we are reassured by His mercy, and allowed to rejoice in the renewal of His covenant with His creatures. In the Evening Lesson, we are admonished to renounce self and sin, and in faith to seek, not an earthly Canaan, but a heavenly country; and are encouraged to go forth on the word of God alone, towards a land which He Himself has provided for those who love Him; but of whose joys we are as yet utterly incapable of forming the least idea.

GENESIS ix. 13.

I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

God's love to man and hate of sin
Are writ on all we see ;
Would that the truth our souls could win
From guilt and woe to flee.

So clear the awful lesson stands,
That he who runs may read ;
But held too fast in Satan's bands
We starve where we might feed.

Hark ! how the dreadful thunder rolls,
Behold the lightnings, flash ;
Earth shakes from centre to her poles,
The lofty mountains crash.

The gushing rain in torrents falls,
The streams are running o'er,—
The sight the husbandman appals,
Joy fills his heart no more.

But, lo ! the beauteous arch appears
Where joyful faith doth view,
God's smile reflected in the tears
His early vengeance drew.

Dismay and terror are dispelled,
He owns at once the sign;—
“My bounties shall not be withheld,
So long as time be thine.”

And dear to every Christian's heart
Is that bright bow he sees;
If sinful memory point a dart,
Thoughts rise to bring him ease.

He owns his Saviour by that bow,
Knows 'tis about his throne;
O'er angry darkness spreads its glow,
His ensign e'er is shown.

Not e'en the cross his precious Lord
Identifies more clear;
Wakes firmer trust upon his word,
Inspires a holier fear.

And while he gazes, thoughts arise
Of that dread hour to come;
When cross and rainbow in the skies,
Shall strike the sinner dumb:

Shall smite him for the mercy scorned,
For love that knew no bound,
For light that on his darkness dawned;—
The thorns his Lord that crowned:

Shall fill himself with humble trust,
With holy hopes of grace,
That he may view among the just
His blest Redeemer's face.

But now less bright those colours glow,
And now its hues are blent;
'Tis only for a time that bow
Can span the firmament.

Yet does he view it fade away
And melt into the shade
Without a fear, for faith's own ray
Continual light has made.

The word on which he firm relies
He knows shall stand secure;
Though earth decay, and sun, and skies,
God ever shall endure.

ASH WEDNESDAY.

Epistle, Joel ii. 12. *Gospel,* St. Matt. vi. 16.
Proper Ps. Morn. vi. xxxii. xxxvii. *Even.* cii. cxxx. cxliii.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that Thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent; create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of Thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The fast of Lent commences on this day to supply the Sundays in Lent. The name of the day is derived from the ancient custom of sprinkling ashes on the head, in token of deep humiliation and sorrow, thereby acknowledging that as we are by nature dust and ashes, so to dust and ashes we justly deserve to be reduced, in punishment for our offences. A stated period has been set apart for mortification and self denial from the earliest ages of Christianity. The Christian Lent probably took

its rise from the Jewish preparation for the yearly expiation, for which forty days were appointed.

The service for the day is peculiarly solemn and affecting. The Collect, which belongs also to the whole season, and is equally fitted for private as well as for public use, is a prayer for contrition and newness of spirit, both of which are the gift of God, and the operation of Him alone who made the heart at first, in order that we, performing the conditions of forgiveness, may obtain pardon for our sins; and concludes with an acknowledgment of God's mercy, and of faith in our Lord and Saviour.

The Epistle, in singularly impressive terms, urges us to make a public profession of our humiliation and repentance on the ground of God's mercy towards us. The Gospel warns us to avoid an ostentatious display of our sorrow, and cautions us against the fatal deception of supposing that any outward demonstration can supply the void of true and internal penitence; a warning the more needful, a caution the more salutary and necessary, as our implacable enemy is ever ready to turn the best exercises of religion into sin, by infusing into them his own spirit of pride and conceit of our own merits.

There are no Proper Lessons appointed for the day; an omission which has never been satisfactorily accounted for. The seven penitential Psalms are ordered to be read in place of those for the day of the month, three in the Morning, three in the Even-

ing ; and the middle, the grand penitential, is placed in the office of Commination. It may not be improper to observe that the word *Amen* at the end of each of the sentences in this office is not an imprecation, but an asseveration or assent to the truth of what is said, and is used in the sense of *verily*,—*it is even so*, as at the end of the Creed ; consequently we may no more refuse to pronounce it in the present instance, and that too with a believing heart, deeply impressed with awe, than in the former.

PSALM li. 3.

I acknowledge my faults, and my sin is ever before me.

SAVIOUR ! behold me prostrate laid,
Cover'd with shame and sin ;
No part is there within
But owns some deep, some fearful shade.

E'en from my very youth, alas !
My footsteps have gone wild ;
The man is but the child,
Whose present faults the first surpass.

It is not to the world I seem
The guilty thing I am ;
Redeemer, Holy Lamb !
'Tis in thy sight myself I deem

Unclean, subdued by guilty taint
Through the vile body spread ;
Sick is the whole frail head,
And the whole heart corrupt and faint.

Against Thee, Lord, it is I've err'd,
Against my better will ;
How doth remembrance still
Make its upbraiding accents heard !

'Tis sweet to be beloved, revered ;—
This gift is also Thine ;
Thou dost the heart incline
To whom our image is endeared.

Yet though the thought our mind will cross,
How far beneath in deed
The fondly partial meed
Of praise we are,—we dread its loss.

How much more, then, thy favor, Lord,
Should sinners fear to lose !
How dread lest thou refuse
Those mercies which thy love has stored.

Turn thou thy face from my misdeeds,—
Oh ! cast me not away,
But let Thy Spirit's ray
Console the breast that mournful pleads.

Wash me from each transgression foul,—
Direct this erring heart ;
Let me from sin depart,
And make, O Lord, thy servant whole.

I know that Thou canst never hate
Whate'er thy hand has made ;
Withhold not then thy aid,
A contrite spirit to create.

With more than outward show of grief,
Be penitence expressed :
Not rending of the vest,
Not sadden'd look,—not fasting brief,

Not vain pretence of lengthened prayer,
Can Him deceive, whose might
All secrets brings to light,
And inmost heart of man lays bare.

O Mediator, Saviour, God !
Plead thou our guilty cause ;
Offenders 'gainst thy laws,
We own we have deserved the rod.

Thine, only thine, is holiness,
Thine too the Father's love ;
Thou canst his wrath remove,—
Ask thou the boon—he needs must bless.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

Morning Lesson, Gen. xix. to v. 30. *Epistle*, 2 Cor. vi. 1.
Evening Lesson, Gen. xxii. *Gospel*, St. Matt. iv. 1.

COLLECT.

O LORD, who for our sake didst fast forty days and forty nights; Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey Thy godly motions in righteousness, and true holiness, to Thy honour and glory, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

It is easy to conceive that as soon as the practice of a fixed season for penitence was determined upon, the retirement of our Lord, and the forty days' fast in the wilderness became a proper subject for contemplation, and consequently of withdrawing our minds from earthly cares and pleasures, and thereby preparing them for a careful review of the past, with a view to amendment for the future. By our Lords' example we are taught how to meet and to conquer our enemy and his, namely, by arming ourselves, like him, with the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

The Collect and the Gospel bear directly on our Saviour's miraculous fast. In the former we pray to reap the benefit of that wonderful instance of humiliation, and for grace to enable us to imitate that abstinence in such a manner as our nature will permit. The Epistle propounds to us the example of one, the Apostle Paul, who, holy and good as he was, and far beyond any degree of excellence to which we may hope to attain, was but a man of like passions and infirmities with ourselves, and as such capable of being imitated with the aid of the same Spirit which upheld himself. This portion of Scripture has reference also to the peculiar week which this Sunday begins,—the Ember week of Lent,—consecrating the Spring of the year to God, and praying for the divine blessing on those who shall be appointed to any ministry in the Church.

The Proper Lessons are well adapted to promote the design of the season. We are moved to repentance by two great motives,—fear and love; the first, or meaner, arising from the dread of punishment felt to be due to sin; the latter, or nobler, springing from a grateful sense of God's mercies, and the relationship in which we stand to Him through Christ. The Morning Lesson, in the terrible destruction of the wicked cities of the plain, is well calculated to awaken the most lively *fear* of the Divine vengeance; while the Evening Lesson is equally fitted to excite our *love*, by drawing us to the contemplation of the offering up of Isaac, that

memorable type of Him who was not only willing to submit to death at the will of His Father, but who actually laid down His life, a sacrifice for the sins of a guilty world. The most careless reader, possessing any knowledge of holy things, can scarcely fail to recognize the resemblance, nor the most heedless, it may be hoped, to be worthily affected by it.

GENESIS xix. 23.

The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar.

THE shades of night were fading fast away,
And the glad sun was waking from his sleep ;
The watchful hours prepared to lead the day,
And tracked with rosy steps the mountains steep ;
The dew was hanging on each verdant spray,
And flowers their fragrant cups were opening to the ray.

The first slight twitter from each downy nest
Had marked the near approach of rising morn ;
But now, arousing from their lengthened rest,
Gay joyous songs salute the blushing dawn :
While earth displays herself in freshest vest,
And gladly spreads the stores she treasures in her breast.

A sound is stirring in the forest wide
Awaked by lively gales that kiss the leaves ;
While the swift stream by lofty crags supplied
With bright-tipped vapours many a chaplet weaves ;
Ungentle brutes in secret coverts hide,
And in their verdant lair, secure, the night abide.

The night abide!—alas! no dew of eve
Shall fall on leaf or smiling lawn again;
No hand again shall flowery chaplet weave,
Nor lightsome footsteps press the fertile plain.
But lo! the sons of toil their couch must leave,
And heavy eyes unclose that had forgot to grieve.

And hearts there were too happy for repose,
(Too happy to be wise) who should be blent
In one that wished for morn; and there were those
Who planned this day should gaily too be spent,
Who would have spurned the fear of future woes,
Anticipating joys from morn to evening's close.

Some, also, eager to increase their store,
Were counting o'er in thought their fancied gains;
Others, though faint, who might in truth deplore,
And half resolve to cleanse their guilty stains;
Hearts lukewarm, too, who virtue would restore,
Who loved the holy way, but loved their ease much more.

But lo! the sun, which seemed as if averse
To bid his splendour kindle into day,
Bursts in his glory forth; the clouds disperse,
And glowing leave him undisputed sway.
One look he casts of pity for that curse
Which o'er the cities waits its vengeance to rehearse.

And *he* is safe whom direful judgment spares—
At once the heavens pour forth their reckless rage ;
The lurid sky in awful splendour glares,
And flames and stately domes fierce conflict wage.
In vain to fly the wretched sinner dares,
One universal wreck each sinful city shares.

'Tis done : no haughty vestiges remain
Of those proud cities and their guilty sons ;
But, rising as from furnace o'er the plain,
The smoke ascends—the liquid fire yet runs
In streams replenished by that dreadful rain,
While earth yet trembling heaves her burning breast in pain.

Oh ! awful sight ! prelude to one more dread,
Of that which shall engulf this globe in flame !
When the Archangel's trump shall wake the dead,
And His eternal judgment shall proclaim,
Before whose face, when heaven and earth are fled,
They safely shall endure for whom his blood was shed.

Then, Christian, hear !—and oh ! be timely wise ;
That hour shall come when none shall be aware ;
As unsuspect as then that morn shall rise,
Hearts shall be gay as theirs, earth smile as fair,
The birds shall sing as blythe, clouds deck the skies,
Nor aught shall warning give to tell creation dies.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

Morning Lesson, Gen. xxvii. *Epistle*, 1 Thess. iv. 1.

Evening Lesson, Gen. xxxiv. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xv. 21.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Purity is the very life of a Christian soul, for without it Scripture expressly declares—"No man shall see God;" but for the acquirement of this great virtue and for the perfect subjection of our appetites and passions, the grace of God alone is sufficient. Wisely, therefore, does the Church teach us in the Collect for this day to pray for His all powerful aid, while in deep humility we confess our own weakness and helplessness.

The Epistle accordingly inculcates upon us, as the special command of our Lord, the necessity of abstaining from all uncleanness, in order to our

sanctification ; while in the Gospel we are taught to whom, and with what qualifications, we are to apply for aid to cast out the evil spirit that may possess us. Perseverance, faith and humility won the deliverance of the Syrophenician's daughter, and He, that was "mighty to save," delayed the performance of the miracle only that the issue of the trial to which He subjected the unhappy mother, might be the more conspicuous. The same qualities will still be attended with the same blessed result, for that merciful ear is not grown weary, nor that powerful arm shortened, that He should refuse the prayer of them who call upon Him faithfully, or be unable to succour them to the utmost.

The Morning Lesson, which is replete with instruction in many other respects, expressly conveys an awful warning against the indulgence of selfish gratification at the cost of any religious principle, whereby, we, like Esau, sell our heavenly birthright for a mess of pottage. At the same time it displays to us the misery resulting from our folly, namely, the rejection of our prayer for the restoration of that inheritance from which we wantonly parted. In the Evening Lesson, which relates the sad history of Dinah, we are taught to shun temptation, and to avoid exposing ourselves to situations perilous to virtue ; they, in fact, who would preserve innocence must be careful not only in the choice of their associates, but in the places they frequent.

GENESIS xxvii. 12.

*And I shall seem to him as a deceiver ; and I shall bring a
curse upon me and not a blessing.*

RIGHTLY the Patriarch feared
When prompted to deceive
The sire by age endeared,
And now about to leave
A world of toil for one of bliss,
That he the heritage should miss
By such an act—his father's kiss
But prove deep cause to grieve.

Thou hat'st the deed : beware,—
Dost thou a blessing seek ?
Alas ! there's many a snare
To tempt thy nature weak ;
And thou must ever take good heed,
Lest thou, too, rue the fatal deed
Which thence may bid thy bosom bleed,
And stain with tears thy cheek.

Not by unlawful means
May any good be sought ;
Nor think the motive screens
Thy guilefulness in ought ;

Good must be gained by good,
All other ways must be withstood :
The man who wears deception's hood
Has sinful folly wrought.

Would'st thou an offering bring?
Ask first thine own intent :
Has true devotion's wing
Its holy impulse lent ?
Or is it but a vain pretence
Some benefit to gain from thence ?
Forbear ! such mockery's an offence,
Thy Maker will resent.

Do doubts assail thy soul ?
Trust thou the warning voice ;—
God would thy will control
Ere thou hast made thy choice
Between the good his smile shall bless,
Though for a while it pleases less,
And that which ends in dire distress,
Though thou mayest first rejoice.

Has He a promise given ?
Then will he make it good,
But ne'er can *He* be driven,
Who all has understood.

Thou canst not change what he has said,
Although for joy that should have fed
Thy soul with bliss, thou reap instead
Woe that shall chill thy blood.

The Patriarch used deceit—
Deceit was thence his bane,
Poisoned the cup most sweet,
And turned his joys to pain ;
Made sharp the pangs that thenceforth lay
Within his long and toilsome way,
And to his last and dying day
Bound round his heart a chain.

Avoid then crooked ways—
For truth's all searching eye
Each poor deceit betrays,
And brands hypocrisy ;
Of falsehood's devious paths beware,
Beneath the flower is hid the snare ;
And though the tempter's fruit be fair,
To taste it—is to die.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

Morning Lesson, Gen. xxxix. *Epistle*, Eph. v. 1.
Evening Lesson, Gen. xlii. *Gospel*, St. Luke xi. 14.

COLLECT.

WE beseech Thee, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of Thy humble servants, and stretch forth the right hand of Thy Majesty, to be our defence against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Vain would be our most vigorous exertions for victory over our passions and evil inclinations, and fruitless our desires to become holy, if we had nothing to depend upon but our own strength. "Our help cometh of God;" and therefore impressed with a just sense of our own weakness, and of well-grounded fear of the many and powerful enemies in league against us, we implore our Almighty Father in the Collect, for Christ' sake, to protect and defend us in the arduous struggle.

That God will assist us, we may learn from the Epistle, which first sets forth the love of Him, who, having submitted to be tempted in all things like as we are, and shown himself victorious, at last died a

voluntary sacrifice and offering for us. It then immediately proceeds to instruct us how to profit by such surpassing love on the part of our Redeemer : viz. by putting away from us every thing that is corrupt, and walking as becomes the children of light, not slumbering in deceitful security, or slothful ease ; but, arousing from the sleep of sin and carelessness, awake to a life of holiness, indicated to us by the Spirit of God.

The Gospel, while it shows us the dreadful power of the devil, exercised formerly not only over the minds, but likewise over the bodies of men ; (for the possession of evil spirits was a calamity totally distinct from mere bodily disease,) evidences to us the omnipotence of Him by whose name we are called, over the Prince of Darkness. It also warns us to shun the wickedness of those, who, unable to deny the truth of the miracle performed in their sight, ascribed it blasphemously to the power of Satan ; and instructs us to place all our dependence on the Lord Jesus, and under His protection to resist our mutual enemy.

The Morning Lesson, by presenting to our contemplation the noble conduct of the youthful Joseph, animates us to like self-denial and purity ; and, putting into our own mouths those well-known words, " How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God ?" places abstinence from all iniquity on its right principle, shaming us, in a manner, from exhibiting a weakness which one so circumstanced as the son of Jacob, withstood. In the Evening Lesson,

we trace in this favoured servant of God, a type of our blessed Saviour; taken from prison and from judgment to be lord over all Egypt, that he might feed his father's house and sustain the lives which must otherwise perish. The narrative naturally leads us to think on Christ, who, sold for a base price, for a time a captive, and confined in the prison-house of death, was raised to the right hand of the Father, where He ever liveth to nourish all who come, in faith and humility, to shelter under the shadow of His wings.

GENESIS xlii. 13.

And one is not.

SWEET are a parent's joys !
'Tis sweet to watch the opening flower,
Though care each day employs ;
And the fond eye at midnight's weary hour
Is seen in vigils bent
Beside yon innocent,
When sickness o'er its couch asserts its power.

'Tis sweet to watch the morn
Of virtue budding in the heart ;
The impulses which scorn
A pang in others' bosom to impart ;
The nobleness of youth
Believing all is truth,
And the soft tear of pity prompt to start.

And fond delight the eye
Of parent drinks as it beholds
Near to maturity
The blossom which each day new charms unfolds,
Setting almost to fruit,
The charge as to refute
All hearts are cast in vice, or sorrow's moulds.

But bitter is the pain,
When, like a fretting moth, disease
Spreads poison in each vein ;
Making the genial stream untimely freeze,
And changing health's bright bloom
For that which marks the tomb,
And tells too plainly life is on the lees.

He who has watched such scene,
Will find it difficult to blot
Memory of what has been ;
And oft when he believes he has forgot
The past with woe allied,
Some goad will prick the side
Of slumbering thought, and whisper—" One is not."

Yes—one is not—no more
Shall form so loved supply his place,
Deep anguish passes o'er
The lines of that late tranquil face :
But do we seek to know
Wherefore was dealt the blow,
Which memory's balm fails wholly to efface ?

Perhaps, like Jacob's son,
Thine has been called to make the way
More safe that thou must run,
Ere thou canst share with him eternal day.

In love it might be sent
To lead thee to repent ;
For God delights to save and not to slay.

He would our spirits wean
From too fond love of worldly things ;
And thus the blow most keen
From his paternal pity springs.
Examine then the past,—
Art thou yet bound too fast
To this low earth, or hast thou loosed its strings ?

Perhaps thou still dost mourn ;
Sad day, and sadder night is thine :
Quit thou the funeral urn,
And check the thought that leads thee to repine.
Look from the type, to One
Who entered heaven alone
That we might share in love his joys divine.

So shall thy grief grow pure,
And answer the Almighty's will ;
Then of his love secure
Peace shall its balm upon thy woes distil ;
And seeds of bliss thou'lt sow,
Which shall hereafter blow
Beside the heavenly river calm and still.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

Morning Lesson, Genesis xliii. *Epistle*, Galatians iv. 21.

Evening Lesson, Gen. xlv. *Gospel*, St. John vi. 1.

COLLECT.

GRANT, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished, by the comfort of Thy grace may mercifully be relieved; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

This Sunday bears the name of the Sunday of *refreshment* as well as that of Mid-Lent, and probably for this reason. Having, it is charitably presumed, humbled ourselves by lowly and deep repentance, and in truth and sincerity put away from us our evil deeds, the Church now permits us to pray for that relief and consolation which God, who has promised to dwell with the contrite heart, may vouchsafe to give. Accordingly in the Collect, while we confess that we deserve punishment only at His hands, we venture to implore the comfort of His grace, the hope of His pardon and mercy. The Epistle, in unison with this petition, withdraws our contemplation from our earthly abode of trouble and sorrow,

to fix them on our heavenly inheritance, the City of God, Jerusalem that is above ; while it sets forth in a lively manner the superior blessings we enjoy in the freedom of the Gospel covenant as compared with the restraint of the Mosaic ritual. The Gospel, harmonizing with the Epistle, cheers us by the relation of the miraculous multiplication of food in the wilderness, and encourages us to look to that Saviour in faith and trust, who is able not only to supply us with "the meat that perisheth," but with that spiritual sustenance which shall nourish our souls into everlasting life.

The Proper Lessons are of the same cheering nature. In the affecting history of Joseph, and in his joyful restoration to his sorrowing father, who had for so many years mourned him as dead, we are taught to carry our views from the type to the antitype—from the wise governor of Egypt, to Him who reigns Lord of lords, and King of kings in heaven,—to the blessings of that government which embraces a whole world, and to that blissful reunion of friends in a land where no famine, no separation shall ever be known.

GENESIS xlv. 3.

I am Joseph, doth my father yet live ?

“ Is then the old man living,
The man of whom ye spake ?
(Cease heart thy fond misgiving,
Why beat as like to break ?)
Inform me how he fareth,—
Speak, have ye left him well ?
His age—say how he beareth
The years he now must tell.

“ His hair must now be hoary,
His eye, so bright, be dim ;
Recalls he but my story ?
How well I picture him.
How oft when slumber sealeth
Day's care in sweet repose,
Before my fancy stealeth,
One whom my bosom knows :

“ And oft I beg his blessing,
Oft press his rev'rend cheek ;
Oft wake whilst still caressing
That holy form and meek :

And then the large tear stealeth,
I, disappointed, weep;
My slumber quite departeth—
I care no more to sleep.

“Oft, too, when high is sounded
My name with loud acclaim,
In thought I am surrounded
By scenes unknown to fame :
Amidst my greatest splendour
An aching void I feel,
And pensive sighs and tender,
My inward thoughts reveal.

“By every bliss surrounded,
My father still I crave;
O'er lands my thoughts have bounded
Though to be near his grave :
Then of his welfare tell me,
Again say how he looks;
Our home—still near it dwell ye? —
Suspense love never brooks.”

So others too have spoken,
Who Joseph's fate have shared;
Who willing, or heart broken,
Have distant climates dared.

And who but loves the feeling
Which nature thus displays ?
Who blames us for revealing
What worth alone betrays ?

Few hearts have not been shaken
At tenderness like this ;
Would thought it could awaken
Of him, who for our bliss
His Father's bosom quitting,—
That Father so beloved,—
In humble garb befitting
Those who his mercy mov'd,

Amidst a dearth more grievous,
A famine of the soul,
Came down no more to leave us
Till under his control
All powers should be subjected,
Himself our living food,
And as by him directed,
Our drink his precious blood.

From lowest depths exalted,
From depths of sin and woe,
Above the heavens high vaulted,
His rule no end shall know :

With liberal hand dispensing
The riches of his grace,
No longer love condensing
To bless one chosen race.

From his celestial treasure
His own redeemed he feeds,
Who make his will their pleasure,
And truly feel their needs :
Nor can his gifts diminish
His gathered store of love ;
Created things must finish,
But nought his care remove.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

Morning Lesson, Exodus iii. *Epistle*, Heb. ix. 11.

Evening Lesson, Exodus v. *Gospel*, St. John viii. 46.

COLLECT.

WE beseech Thee, Almighty God, mercifully to look upon Thy people; that by Thy great goodness they may be governed and preserved evermore, both in body and soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This Sunday has received the name of Passion Sunday. As the season of Lent has been appointed by our Church as a preparation for the devout and proper commemoration of our Lord's death and passion, the services for each Sunday have gradually led to that awful event; but now, taking a more decided character, they bear directly upon the subject, and are eminently calculated to excite in us the deepest sorrow for those sins which made such bitter sufferings necessary, and to inflame our love towards him who voluntarily endured them for our sakes.

The Collect, still in a strain of deep humility, implores the Almighty to look mercifully upon *His people*, and to protect them in soul and body, whereby

we acknowledge the peculiar situation in which we stand towards Him, as His by right of adoption and redemption, as well as of creation, and own His sovereign and parental claim to our obedience and reverence. The Epistle leads us immediately to the contemplation of Christ's meritorious sacrifice, shewing us that all former sacrifices are but figures and shadows of the true. As an introduction to the dreadful scene about to be presented to us, the Gospel is selected from that portion of the Holy Scripture which narrates the opprobrious language, and malicious, though vain, attempt on our Lord's life, which occurred in the temple a few days previous to the consummation of the violence of his enemies.

The Proper Lessons lead us back to the appearance of God to Moses preparatory to the deliverance of the chosen people from Egyptian bondage. The Lord Jehovah, the great I AM, is the Eternal Word, the same who declared, in this day's Gospel, that, before Abraham was, He Himself was in existence, and who thus identified Himself as our Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, God Almighty. The slavery of the Israelites fitly represents our own slavery in sin; their deliverance was typical of ours; our Deliverer was the same as theirs; the redemption of each was the work of His Almighty arm, and of His infinite mercy. The succession of one terrible infliction of punishment after another, before the emancipation of the Israelites from the

galling fetters in which they were held could be effected, may serve to remind us that our freedom from the still more oppressive yoke of sin and Satan, is a work not to be achieved at once, but the fruit of similar dealings on the part of the Almighty towards us. Experience and observation shew us that thus God, to arouse us to repentance, and the more effectually to break the bonds with which our evil passions and unruly appetites enslave us, permits his judgments to fall upon us, increasing their severity each time as we oppose his merciful design, and harden ourselves in iniquity. It behoves us then to heed with awful attention each solemn call to amendment, and with humility, patience, and perseverance, to aid Almighty goodness in perfecting our deliverance and salvation. By such meditation as this Sunday's memorable Lessons induce, our faith is strengthened; and the devout spirit learns to rest on Him whose power sustains no diminution, and who, in all things, is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

ST. JOHN viii. 48.

*Then answered the Jews and said unto him, Say we not well that
thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil ?*

Now step by step we must descend
With our beloved Redeemer to his grave ;
Watch the dire sorrows that impend
O'er him whose crime was that he came to save.
But bring a mind
Composed, resigned,
And with meek tears his holy footsteps lave.

Wisdom eternal was his own ;
But contradiction vile he must endure,
Must still the fierce demoniac's groan,
Yet hear the deed ascribed to powers impure—
Must meekly bear
All wretches dare
In malice utter of each wondrous cure.

Oh ! who can fully comprehend
The pain perverseness such as this must cause ?
We cannot even bear a friend
One moment in his warm delight to pause
Of our poor deeds—
Alas ! man needs,
Even when best, his fellow-man's applause.

Yea, we esteem small slights as wrongs,—
Repent us almost of our noblest deeds
If aught of praise we think belongs
To us should be withheld : we needs must feed
 On action great,
 And deem it hate
Should one alone refuse th' expected meed.

But *He* was God, most pure, most high,
And scorn and base revilings were, he knew,
 Their right for whom he came to die,
And the sharp cross with his dear blood bedew.
 And he must taste,
 E'en to the last,
Such agony as earth or heaven ne'er knew.

Darker the scene yet daily grows,
More careful then repentance meet fulfil ;
 Prepare thee, sinner, for the close,
By true performance of thy Saviour's will.
 For thee he bled,
 For thee lay dead—
Canst thou remember this, and shame him still ?

The boast is thine—thou art redeemed :
So Israel boasted too in ancient days ;
 To them the yoke most grievous seemed,
And freedom well might wake their songs of praise.

But Christ the spell
Of sin and hell
For ever has destroyed, and heaven displays.

Escape from bondage such as this
Might call forth raptures from a seraph's tongue ;
But thou must humble be in bliss,
Nor dare rejoice till penitence has wrung
With grief thy breast
For ways unblest,
And his own garb thy Lord has o'er thee flung.

Reflect, with deep remorse and shame,
On all thy Saviour felt and wrought for thee ;
And kindle thus the holy flame
Of grateful love and deep humility.
Think on the price
That sacrifice
Cost the incarnate Son of majesty.

All idle gaiety disown,
Before the throne of mercy humbly kneel ;
And if a bitter root be known
Still yielding evil fruit, thy woe reveal.
None he'll upbraid
Who seek his aid,
And in his way to death will thee too heal.

PALM SUNDAY.

Morning Lessons, Exodus ix. *Evening Lessons*, Exodus x.

St. Matt. xxvi,

Heb. v. 1—11.

Epistle, Philip. ii. 5.

Gospel, St. Matt. xxvii.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who of Thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility; mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of His patience, and also be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

We have now reached the commencement of that week, the most awful, the most solemn, and the most important the world has ever witnessed. Standing then on holy ground, it behoves us to put off our shoes—every vestige of sin and iniquity—and to approach with humility and purity of spirit, the sacred spot. Every child of Adam is interested in the events now under contemplation, for as Christ died and suffered for all collectively, so was he

bruised and afflicted, condemned and crucified for each one individually. Justly, then, might we too smite our breast and return, glad to hide our face from the dreadful spectacle; but weighty and holy considerations urge us to proceed, till at the very foot of the cross we may mingle our tears with that blood, which, properly applied, shall for ever wash away our offences.

Well indeed may this week be designated the great, the holy, the Passion week; "Not," observes that eminent father of the Church, St. Chrysostom, "because it consists of longer days, or more in number than other weeks, but because at this time great things were wrought for us by our Lord. For in this week the ancient tyranny of the Devil was dissolved, death was extinguished, the strong man was bound, his goods were spoiled, sin was abolished, the curse was destroyed, Paradise was opened, heaven became accessible, the God of peace made peace between things in heaven and things on earth—therefore it is called—the great week."

The Sunday itself is called Palm Sunday, in allusion to the multitude having met our blessed Lord upon his entrance into Jerusalem, with palm branches in their hands, strewing them in the way, as was the usual ceremony in the East before kings.

In the beautiful and pathetic Collect for the day, which is the Collect for the week down to Friday, having stated the cause of Christ's death, we pray to be made conformable to His patient suffering, that we

may become partakers of the joy and glory of His resurrection. The Epistle, enlarging on the subject, proposes for our imitation the example of our blessed Redeemer, the pattern of all perfection: and the Gospel narrates at full the particulars of His death and passion.

The Proper Lessons, like those of the previous Sunday, direct us in the wonders exhibited for the redemption of the Israelites, to look to those superior wonders which were wrought for our own salvation from the tyranny of sin and Satan. In various instances Moses was an eminent type of our Lord, and in reading or hearing these chapters read we should be careful to bear this truth in remembrance; for though we must never strain Scripture for any purpose whatever, we should never allow a real point of resemblance to escape us, lest we should lose much that would serve to confirm our hopes and to strengthen our faith. Thus in the act of Moses going out of the city, and stretching forth his hands to allay the fury of the storm which was then desolating the land for the iniquity of its inhabitants, we are furnished with a type of Him who, suffering without the gate of the city, appeased, in the uplifting of those blessed hands stretched out on the cross, the dreadful storm of Almighty vengeance against a sinful world.

ST. MATTHEW xxvi. 56.

Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Oh ! life is e'er a weary scene,
And sharp and many are the ills that lie
Between our birth and hour in which we die ;
And rarely sky serene
Save for short space doth smile upon our head—
Our fairest hopes but bloom soon to be withered.

Yet is there one sweet drop
Infused into the deadliest cup we drink ;
The tie of holy love, of friendship's link,
Regard that will not stop
At sharpest proof, and shares the cup we drain,
Making it oft so sweet, it shames us to complain.

But He, our Lord and Life,
He who was love itself, who ne'er appeared
But sickness was relieved, or misery cheered,
In his last awful strife
No hand of comfort found—he, he alone
Who every woe had shared, was left midst foes to groan.

From friend, from pity riven,
When most his suffering spirit needed stay,
By one denied, one who had vowed that day—
 Spite of the warning given,—
That nought of danger should his love divide,
But if the need required, would perish by his side.

By one—the traitor fell—
Through love of gain and base revenge, betrayed,
Leaguings himself with all the powers arrayed
 Of malice and of hell;
That one alone affection's pledge bestowed,
And the false mark of love his holy victim shewed.

He looked for some in vain
Amidst the many who his love had shared
To pity him, to soothe the pangs prepared;
 Alas! that this sore pain
Must yet be added to that load of grief,
Each creature to have blessed—from none to have relief.

But where the hand so pure
That might have minister'd in that dread hour
To him, the holy Lamb of God? What power
 Had *they* to soothe whose cure
Was cause of all that agony and woe?
To soothe—none there, alas! that privilege might know.

Yet doth the human heart,
(And he was human even as divine ;)
Look for some little proof, some passing sign
Of feeling, though suppressed ;
And such his nature gentle, holy, kind,
Neglect and slight might well be torture to his mind.

Were they alone then weak ?
Has one alone denied—betrayed his Lord ?
Hide, hide thy face and cry—"mercy accord ;"
For all have need to seek
Thy merciful forgiveness of the past,
For all have wounded thee, and shall wound till the last.

Nor their excuse our plea,
No terror frights our souls—we have no fear
Of scourge and cross, yet we our conscience sear ;
With thy worst foes agree,
Or for earth's meanest lures thy side desert,
And in thy cause, oh shame ! are lukewarm and inert.

Yet pity us we pray,
And grant us grace this awful week to spend,
That holy joy with penitence may blend ;
That purer grown each day,
Our sins may in thy grave for ever lie,
And we alive in thee, may henceforth never die.

MONDAY BEFORE EASTER.

Epistle, Isaiah lxiii. 1. *Gospel*, St. Mark xiv. 1.

It would argue great insensibility, to say the least, if we were to suffer any day of this holy week to pass without serious thought; and in neglect of those offices appointed for its due observance. Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the nature or degree of fasting enjoined upon us by the Church, or by our own conscience, there can remain no doubt but that this week ought to be set apart from all vain and frivolous amusements; all worldly and sensual gratifications, and from whatever may tend to divert our mind from the solemnity of it. We may guard our heart, and the thoughts which proceed from it; and be serious without either pretence or ostentation, even amidst the most onerous occupations of life. We can abstain from evil in every situation, and we have abundant opportunities of doing good in all.

Whilst the Collect is the same for the four first days of this holy week, each has its separate Epistle and Gospel. By the term Epistle, indeed, strictly speaking, is meant a portion from one of the Epistles in the New Testament; but the object of its introduction being to prepare for the Gospel, any portion

of Scripture, applicable for the purpose, may with propriety be used. The portion selected from Isaiah for this day's Epistle, is so singularly sublime and striking, that it can scarcely fail to arrest attention. Our blessed Lord is represented as a great warrior returning from the conquest of His enemies,—His own unassisted arm having wrought the victory. We contemplate him as God, and stand impressed with holy wonder, awe, admiration, and gratitude, at the hardships, as well as at the success of that contest; the object of which was our own salvation. That our Lord was alone in this mighty conflict; that He looked, and there was none to help, is explained in the simple but awful truth,—that He bore our sins, and, that as such, all the powers of Heaven and Hell were directed against Him; the former to punish in His sacred person, the whole body of sin; the latter to defeat, if possible, the gracious work He had undertaken. This truth we may gather from the Gospel; upon which it behoves us deeply to reflect, and to weigh carefully every circumstance related in it, bearing constantly in our mind for whom, and by whom, the sufferings there narrated were endured.

ST. MARK xiv. 72.

*And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him,
"Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice."*

"AND when he thought thereon he wept;" wept sore !
And he had braved the wave, been blessed for faith,
He, he could curse and swear—
He who had vowed to die !

Then loved he not his lord? Yea, with a warmth
That shames the breast which entertains such doubt.
Nor meant he less than he,
Warmed by his zeal, had said.

Sincerity was his, and he was prompt
To feel, and bold and noble too in heart ;
But he was prone to sin,
And he relied on self.

He deemed himself secure—so we believe.
He had been taught before that he was weak ;
But hearts must oft be bruised
To be convinced that truth !

But how must he have quailed to sink thus low
At terrors heightened by the tempter's art ;
For now the Evil One
Had found the hour he sought.

And that foul spirit too prevailed in sight,
(Fear'd also by himself) of his dear lord.

His double malice thus
Was fully gratified.

Not 'gainst the servant was his hate : for hate
Is born of fear, nor with contempt may dwell ;
Malignity more deep
Was mingled with his scorn.

He envied God's meek Son the lowly love
E'en of one poor disciple—none loved him,
And it were joy to pierce,
He felt, a tender part.

He had been foiled before in his attempt,
Knew too his lord had prayed for him ; and hence
'Twas worth his utmost skill
To compass his disgrace.

But malice oft-times overleaps its bounds,
And works its own defeat : 'twas not enough
He should deny his Lord,
That Lord must see his fall.

And he perhaps had been for ever lost
Had the arch-fiend approached on other spot—
One look, one gentle look
He met,—and he was saved.

Flow, flow ye bitter tears, ye wash away,
In your descent, despair, and guilt, and shame ;
Nor blessed to him alone,
To others ye bring peace.

Touched with remorse the sinner shall recall
The weak disciple's guilt—accepted woe ;
And cheered with thought thereof,
Shall raise his eye and hope.

But heed we well the lesson thus conveyed :
The glance of that mild eye divine, near which
In love he lingered still,
Repentance, safety wrought.

Beware we then how from the Church we stray,
In which Christ's holy presence is assured ;
For prone we are to ill,
And mortal needs must err.

While he, our fatal enemy, well knows
How best to time the artful snare he lays ;
And he himself has learnt
He fails where Jesus is.

If then beyond its precincts we presume ;
If from our Master's holy side we roam,
Like Peter we may fall,
But not, like him, may rise.

TUESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

Epistle, Isaiah i. 5.*Gospel*, St. Mark xv. 1.

VERY different is the scene presented in this day's Epistle to that of yesterday's. We behold no more the mighty conqueror returning from the victory; but we are shown the conflict itself, and instructed in its nature. In the first we recognized the Divinity, in the present we are made to look on the humanity of Christ, and to confess, with shame, the hatefulness of sin which could cause the Lord of Life to submit to such indignities and cruel treatment for the sake of guilty man.

Nor ought we to suffer the wonderful testimony to escape us which this portion of Scripture contains, to the truth that the blessed Jesus was the true Messiah. A bystander could not have described the scene more accurately than the Prophet has done whose inspired pen depicted it three hundred years before its fulfilment. The interior of the High Priest's palace seems indeed laid open to our view; and the barbarous treatment, the affronts and insults offered to our blessed Lord, the meek demeanour of the holy sufferer, and the relentless persecution of his oppressors presented to us,

not as events to come, but as transactions which the historian has recorded.

The Gospel so entirely harmonizes with the Epistle, or rather is so clearly a continuation of it, that he who compares the one with the other, must have obstinately hardened himself in unbelief, if he can resist the evidence contained in them to the truth of Christianity, and the unadulterated purity of the Scriptures. In the one we behold the commencement of our Redeemer's sufferings, in the latter we are led to the consummation of them, as in a continued relation we follow him from the hall of Caiaphas to the judgment seat of Pilate, and from thence to crucifixion and to death. The plan of man's redemption therefore was long preconcerted in the counsels of the Most High, and violent and wicked men in slaying the Lord's anointed but fulfilled that which eternal wisdom had decreed. Let us take heed, however, lest while professing ourselves firm in the faith, we fail in the proof of our obedience ; and forbearing to walk in the light of our own fire—the devices of our own hearts—let us truly trust, “in grateful and holy confidence,” in the name of the Lord, and “stay us upon our God.”

ST. MARK XV. 21.

And they compel one Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

"SEE, see ! he faints !—too heavy is the load ;
Stand back awhile—he'll die upon the road :
Press not so close !—give air !
He will survive—lo ! there
The blood is mounting to his livid cheek—
Again he moves—he was but tired and weak.

" Ye raise him up too soon—he reels beneath
The burthen yet : death dew below that wreath
Mix with the trickling blood :
Let some one bear the wood,
Lest even now he 'scape the torture due
To guilt like his, nor we his sufferings view."

O ! happy Simon ! fear not the disgrace,
The taunts, the sneers ; a blessing on thy race
Shall recompense the deed :
Thyself, thy holy seed
Shall in remembrance stand beside thy Lord's,
'Graved in the page which his own acts records.

Thrice happy thou, whose lot it was to share,
And ease the load thy Saviour's shoulders bare :
 The load thy sins that day
 Helped on that Lamb to lay,
While we with guilt more multiplied and deep
Perhaps than thine, may but at distance weep.

How envied mayst thou be for that bless'd task !
No cause hast thou thy blushing face to mask ;
 'Tis the accursed tree,
 And worse than murderer he,
For whom thou bear'st it is esteemed ;
But on that cross a world shall be redeemed.

Follow, my soul, that sad and dolorous way ;
Go, join the train !—go, smite thy breast and say,
 “ For me my God must die,”
 Nor turn thy conscious eye,
Distressed and shocked, from that most awful sight !—
What plea hast thou to spare thyself such sight ?

Yes ! dwell upon the scene. Thy heart is hard
And should be moved : thy sins that visage marred ;
 And yet thou dwellest at ease,
 Seeking thyself to please,
Nor pressing on thy still reluctant sense—
He bled for thee—for wretched man's offence.

Go with him to the cross—thy stand there take ;
Behold his pangs—see earth beneath thee quake :
 Look on that dismal sky,
 Hear that loud, piercing cry,
And learn how God detests the taint of sin—
What agonies it cost thy peace to win.

Humble thyself; but not alone with tears
Lament thy Lord ; graceful such woe appears,
 And just ; but oh ! beware
 Lest it should prove a snare ;
We mourn him only as our God approves,
When, shunning sin, we walk in ways he loves.

A rigid fast, a fast from evil deeds,
From evil thoughts observe : there is that feeds
 The very pride that brought
 The Lord to death, and wrought
Each guilty act that calls us to lament,—
Shun this mistake wouldst thou be innocent.

In silence and alone lay bare thy breast ;
Before thy God display the mourner's part :
 Weep not for him, but weep
 Sore for thyself, and keep
Not vigils only that debars from rest,
But unremitting watchings o'er thy breast.

WEDNESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

Morning Lesson, Hosea xiii. *Evening Lesson*, Hosea xiv.

St. John xi. 45.

Epistle, Heb. ix. 16.

Gospel, St. Luke xxii. 1.

A SUFFERING Messiah was a stumbling-block to the Jews, as it has since been to more modern unbelievers; yet it absolutely behoved Christ thus to suffer, for without shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. He Himself had told His disciples it was expedient even for them that He should leave them, and the Epistle for the day sets forth this necessity or expediency. As in a temporal sense we are unable to profit by the liberality of a benefactor, expressed towards us in his will, till his death; so neither could our claim, as inheritors of heaven, be substantiated till He from whom we derive it, had tasted of death for our sakes. The superior advantages of the New Testament of Jesus Christ, as a covenant, over that of the Mosaic dispensation, by which the former was typified, are also clearly and emphatically set forth in the portion of Scripture selected for this day's service. As in the previous covenant, the solemn contract between God and man

was sealed by the blood of the sacrifice, so of this new and better Testament, the blood of Christ is the sign and seal. Whilst then in sorrow we acknowledge that He was once offered to bear the sins of many, and that to plead efficaciously for us with the Father, it was indispensable that He should plead the merits of His own blood shed for us, the Apostle reminds us for our comfort, that to the faithful, to those who will apply the merits of that precious death to themselves as He has enjoined, He shall appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.

That presumption may, in no degree, enter our heart, or, deceived by spiritual pride, we may not fancy that the blessed inheritance thus purchased for us, is irrevocably our own, we are admonished in the Gospel by the fall of St. Peter that we are never less secure than when, in the prosecution of a holy design, we rely on our own strength, and take self-confidence for our support. Humility is the Christian's first lesson, his last and safest; and he who would prove his progress in his spiritual course must take his advance in this holy virtue as the test and measure of his improvement.

The Proper Lessons appointed for this day's service are expressive of God's anger against sin, and of his returning mercy towards His redeemed. In unison with the Epistle and Gospel, the destruction of death and the grave by Him who has the power of both—our Lord and Saviour,—is prophecied in clear and express terms in the lessons from the Old Testament,

and the blessings of a renewal of God's covenant with his repentant people are set forth in highly figurative and glowing language. The unwitting but remarkable declaration of the High Priest that it was expedient that one should die for the people, in order that all should not perish, is contained in the Lesson from the New Testament, which was probably selected with reference to this prophecy.

ST. LUKE xxii. 5.

And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

MANY and foul the sins that stain
The soul of fallen man ;
But none more vile than love of gain,
None more has proved his bane.
'Twas hateful thirst of sordid gold
The Lord of Life, of Heaven that sold ;
That gave the only soul we know
To depths of hell and everlasting woe.

Unfeeling as the flinty stone,
Deaf to each sacred tie :
Nor smile of love, nor painful groan,
The mute imploring eye—
Pale misery's tear nor pity's prayer,
Nor holy claim for kindness, e'er
Can touch the heart where avarice dwells,
Or draw compunction from its icy cells.

No crime so vile that owes not birth
To this malignant vice ;
Scourge of a desolated earth—
By Satan to entice

A soul he hates with cunning used,
Yet least of all to be excused ;
No soil but it will dare infest,
But finds a home alone in meanest breast.

If then thy bosom owns the taint,
 (And mind thou'rt not deceived :)
Go view that sight, hear that complaint
 Which nature heard and heaved.
With penitential, mournful eye,
Behold thy Saviour's agony ;
By mental anguish see him laid
Suffused with bloody sweat in moonlight glade.

In every horror of that scene,
 A just reproof read thou—
Thy superscription in the keen
 Distress of that pale brow ;
Reproof in all the anguish felt,
The woes upon that just one dealt,
In all the pangs that rent his soul,
And shudder at a crime so base, so foul.

Or, follow thou the traitor vile :
 Observe how soon that gain
Becomes unable to beguile
 His guilty soul of pain.

Hear him in agony implore
The hated treasure to restore ;
Despair within his heart and dread,
That drives him from the living to the dead.

Dost thou then own Christ's holy name ?
Dost feel a Saviour's need ?
The merits of his death would claim ?
Low at his footstool plead
For grace to cleanse thee of that spot,
"Repentance that repenteth not,"
The power to flee while time is thine
From Satan's snares and walk in paths divine.

The gold which perisheth disdain ;
Be rich before thy God ;
Soon shall all wealth to thee be vain,
For thou must make the sod
Thy resting place, where gold shall ne'er
The cold breast warm, the dim eye cheer,
While contrite tears and holy deeds
Shall rise with thee where Christ his chosen feeds.

fears the consequences of partaking unworthily, he should fear the consequences of not partaking at all." Then Jesus said to them, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, *ye have no life in you.*" John vi. 53.

The Gospel, treating, like that of the previous days of our Lord's passion, contains the remarkable account of the penitent thief, by which the *hope* of pardon is given to the latest penitent, but by which *security* is afforded to none. The subject is a very useful one for reflection; but the greatest care should be taken that we do not pervert an instance of mercy which can never happen again under like circumstances, into an encouragement of a delay of repentance, for which no time may be allowed, or, being allowed, may still find us unwilling to profit by it.

The Proper Lessons are eminently calculated to raise our devotion, and to strengthen our faith. The first Morning Lesson contains the prophecy of the seventy weeks, by which the very time was fixed when Messiah should be cut off, but not for Himself. The Second Lesson, which recounts some of the leading circumstances of the last evening that our blessed Saviour passed with His disciples, strongly inculcates the lesson of humility and the danger of self-confidence. The Evening Lesson, which is equally appropriate with the others, is prophetic of Christ's coming, of His mercy and care over His Church, of His new covenant, and of the vast increase of His faithful people.

1 COR. xi. 23.

*For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered
unto you.*

THEY have made ready all,
And ranged themselves around the sacred board ;
Nor does the thought appal
'Tis the last time, and that the woes long stored
Are now about to break upon their head ;
Their Lord is with them still—by him they still are fed.

The last—oh ! bitter word !
When hearts are conscious of the fatal truth.
What feelings has it stirred,
Shading strong manhood's brow, and robbing youth
Of every dimpling smile as thought comes o'er
Of that sweet happiness which they shall taste no more.

How gaze we on the face
Of one whom we shall never see again !
How every feature trace,
Thus treasuring records up for future pain !
How hang upon each word ! How fear to break
The loved discourse he holds ere he departure take.

Yet often we regret
We had not known that we no more should meet,
And tears our cheek will wet
As we recall each tender look and sweet :
So sweet we think some holy spirit shed
Its unction in that hour to fit him for the dead.

Finished the ancient rite—
Old things for ever now must pass away,
The shade burst into light.
All is prepared the very Lamb to slay
From earth's foundations offered up for sin—
The type must be complete—memorial begin.

He takes the covered bread,
The sacred portion breaks and gives to each :
“ My body this,” he said,
“ Broken for you”—(this truth, O Spirit! teach)
“ Filled with my blood this cup shall henceforth be,
Then drink ye all of this in memory of me.”

The awful words they hear,
And strange and vague sensations fill their breast
With sad foreboding fear.
E'en *they* with joy unmixed might not be blest
At that first sacred hour—mercy but speaks
Of chastisement deserved,—of love that pardon seeks.

The death of him they loved,
A death, too, met for them was thus conveyed—
Well might they then be moved,
And well may since each conscious heart upbraid
E'en the most fitting guest his feast to share,
And temper holy joy with meekness and with prayer.

But blessed be thy love,
O Saviour ! most adored, who thus hast given
(Pledge of our peace above)
Thyself, the true, the living bread from heaven.
Nourished by thee we dread not that last day,
For none that feed on thee may be of death the prey.

But sad the Lord is grown,
And direful words conclude that blest repast :
A traitor shall be known—
The terrified disciples gaze aghast,
And the faint question ask, " Lord, is it I ?"
(Soul, ask thyself the same and fear the dread reply.)

They leave the holy room ;
Hell's bands to crush him now are all arrayed ;
His soul is wrapt in gloom !
Bathed with mysterious blood behold him laid—
Dost wonder what such agony portends ?
'Tis known to Him alone who all things comprehends.

It is a night indeed
As erst to be observed, and from like cause—
A race from slavery freed,
Snatched from destruction's wide-extended jaws.
With shoes upon thy feet, and staff in hand,
Prepare in haste to leave thy Egypt's guilty land.

Indulge not careless ease,
Nor rest unsanctified beneath thy roof;
Thy God was on his knees,—
Wilt thou refuse? From him friends stood aloof,
And all that earth had ever seen of woe
Was sent that awful night for thy dear Lord to know.

Again thy life review;
Weep o'er thy sins, fresh resolutions make
Thy footsteps to renew,
And every course forbidden to forsake:
Then with a humble heart the morn await,
And Calvary ascend through his own temple-gate,

GOOD FRIDAY.

Morning Lessons, Gen. xxii. to v. 20. *Evening Lessons*, Isa. lii.

St. John xviii.

1 St. Peter ii.

Epistle, Heb. x. 1.

Gospel, St. John xix. 1.

Proper Psalms, xxii. xl. liv.

Proper Ps. lxi. lxxxviii.

COLLECTS.

ALMIGHTY GOD, we beseech Thee graciously to behold this Thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end, Amen.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified; receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in Thy holy Church, that every member of the same in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee, through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

O MERCIFUL God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that Thou hast made, nor wouldest the death

of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of Thy word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to Thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Ill, it has been observed, does the name of this day seem to accord with the subject of it. "A day of fasting and of prayer, of humiliation and sorrow; a day of darkness, of blood and death;" a day which witnessed the most awful transaction that history has ever recorded, or the world can ever again witness—the Son of God crucified, and that by the very beings for whom he was content to lay down His sacred life. But good, nevertheless, unutterably good, is this holy day to the whole race of mankind; for, to the death of Christ we owe life, and all that is really good, either in time or eternity. Joy and sorrow, shame and gratitude, then must rightly divide our heart; and draw from us proofs of conduct suitable to such emotions. From the very earliest ages this holy day has been observed in the strictest penitential manner; nor can it be supposed that any arguments are needed at the present time to enforce such a respect of it, as a merci-

ful God must expect at our hands, or, as decency, not to say just and holy thankfulness, demands.

Great care has been taken in the selection of the different parts of the office of this sacred day. Our meditation throughout the week has been gradually, yet forcibly drawn to the awful event which completes it; but on this day, all that can affect our heart, enliven our faith, or enlarge our charity, has been brought to bear. The Collects, embracing the cause of our Lord's death, and the blessed effects of it, are so framed as to omit no petition which such a cause, and such results, in the true spirit of charity, suggest.

The first Morning Lesson narrates the offering up of Isaac, in which remarkable transaction, the love of God, the Father, in giving His only Son to die for us, and the obedience of God, the Son, to the will of his Father, are clearly and strikingly typified.* The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is again selected, and, most appropriately, for the first Evening Lesson; the day's awful event being at once a commentary upon it, and the fulfilment of the prophecies it contains. The second Morning Lesson and the Gospel, which was reserved with great propriety for this day, show the completion of all that had been foretold of the sufferings of the Messiah; and should leave us grateful

* The Church used this Lesson for this day's service so early as the time of St. Austin. This eminent man, who was Bishop of Hippo, was born at Tojaste in Numidia, in the year 354, and died in the year 430.

indeed for our redemption, but humble and afflicted at the cause of them.

The Epistle and the second Evening Lesson point out the blessed effects of Christ's death, and enforce the practical application of it in a life of obedience and godliness, of faith and purity. In the second Evening Lesson we are exhorted to patience under afflictions, the example of our blessed Redeemer being propounded for our imitation.

The Proper Psalms are so suitable to the subject of the day, that they require no comment. The twenty-second in particular, which was either in part or entirely recited by our Lord on the Cross, and of which many passages were literally fulfilled in His sufferings, can never be read without the liveliest sentiments of awe and astonishment, of love and grateful sorrow.

HEBREWS x. 10.

*By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the
body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

Was it for me that thou didst watch and pray ?
For me didst utter that most doleful cry ?
For me like lamb to slaughter led away ?
Didst bow for me thy sacred head and die ?

Was it for me the thorny crown was twined
Around thy sacred brows, thy visage marred ?
For me denied the voice of friendship kind ?
For me wert thou thy Father's face debarred ?

Was it for me those limbs were racked and torn ?
For me didst thou endure that cruel thirst ?
For me were all those direful sufferings borne ?
For me wert thou content to be accurst ?

Did the mysterious tide for me then flow,
In mingled current from thy piercèd side ?
For me, a guilty wretch debased so low,
As from myself the loathsome view to hide.

Stupendous love ! beyond what angels know,
Oh ! what could move thee to such costly love !
Shame, death endure for a rebellious foe,
And leave thy Father's breast—thy throne above.

Break stubborn heart, in contrite woe dissolve,
Too gentle are these tears for thee to shed ;
Oh ! show thy penitence in firm resolve
To quit thy sins, and to the world be dead.

Wash thee from every stain, and freely give
The only sacrifice that he will prize—
A grateful heart ;—he died that thou mayst live ;
He lives that thou mayst join him in the skies !

EASTER EVE.

Morning Lessons, Zechariah ix. *Evening Lessons*, Exodus xiii.

St. Luke xxiii. 50.

Hebrews iv.

Epistle, 1 St. Peter iii. 17.

Gospel, St. Matt. xxvii. 57.

COLLECT.

GRANT, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of Thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections, we may be buried with Him; and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection; for His merits, who died and was buried, and rose again for us, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This eve was formerly celebrated in a variety of ways expressive of reverence and joyful expectation of the great event it preceded.* Our Church, laying aside all vain or unprofitable ceremonies, simply calls her children together to meditate upon

* It was observed in the primitive Church with singular devotion; the vigil continued till midnight, and with some till cock crowing; the time was spent in reading the law and the prophets, in expounding the Scriptures, and in baptising the catechumens.

our Saviour's death and burial; and surely no one whose heart and mind have been properly prepared by the exercises of the foregoing solemn days, will experience any reluctance in obeying her voice.

The Collect, reminding us that we have been baptized into the death of Christ, points out the necessity of our being conformed alike to it and to his resurrection, by mortifying our sinful appetites, (thereby showing that while faith in Christ must have its perfect work, our own exertions to lead a holy life are indispensable,) in order that through the grave and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection through His merits.

The Epistle, in harmony with the Collect, taking for its consideration the sacrament of baptism, shews us that we must be conformed to the sufferings of Christ as we would be partakers of the glory which his resurrection has purchased for us. The Gospel relates the particulars of his burial, in which respect each of the Evangelists is very circumstantial, and with good cause. The death and resurrection of our Lord are the fundamental points of the Christian religion; and to be assured of the last we must be certain of the first. As His death made atonement for the sins of mankind, it was necessary that the important fact should be established beyond controversy, and no better pledge of this can be given than that His enemies killed Him and His friends buried Him. In like manner, as His resurrection alone

could prove that the atonement was accepted, it was of the utmost consequence that no room should be left for suspicion, that the same body which had been deposited in the grave was not actually restored to life again. Our Church marks the importance she attaches to the fact of Christ's burial, by making it an article of faith in all her creeds. The whole service invites us to reflect upon our own awful change, as well as prepares us for the joyful event which is approaching.

The Proper Lessons are selected with the Church's wonted wisdom. The first Morning Lesson, which is full of promise of God's returning favor, and expressive of the universal blessing of Christ's appearance, and the extent and duration of His kingdom, contains the well known prophetic and rapturous command, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, for thy King cometh unto thee," a command to which the devout Christian heart will eagerly respond. The Second Lesson repeats the history of Christ's burial. In the first Evening Lesson the memorial of the Passover, which was a type of Christ's death, is commanded; and the second warns us of the danger of losing, through unbelief, the rest promised to the children of God.

ST. MATTHEW xxvii. 59.

And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb.

HE that has watched beside the bed
Where parting life is laid,
And marked the hues that o'er it spread
Their dark and ghastly shade :
He best can tell, and only he, the keen,
The bitter anguish of that awful scene.

Harder and harder still the breath
The lab'ring bosom draws ;
Fast gathering are the dews of death,
The faint pulsations pause :
Now cold the hand, now glazed the hollow eye,
Nought tokens life except the short, quick sigh.

All, all is silence round. None dare
That awful calm to break :
Sad meaning looks each heart prepare,
That soon the soul will take
Her everlasting flight from earth, and leave
The fond and faithful heart unchecked to grieve.

'Tis past ; that groan, and all is o'er :
Now freely thou mayst weep,
Nor sigh, nor tear, shall pain him more,
Thou wilt not break that sleep ;
And thou mayst kiss those wan and faded cheeks,
Nought shall disturb him till th' archangel speaks.

Now to the silent grave convey
Who once was all thine own ;
For the last time he leads the way
Thou shalt retrace alone.
Oh ! fatal penalty of guilt and sin,
May none exemption from that warfare win ?

None, none may hope t' escape that doom,
Mourning or mourned we lie ;
The brightest, fairest from the tomb
Proclaim that all must die ;
That all alike in brief yet certain term
Must make the clay their bed, and feed the worm.

Thus the disciples watching stood,
The fatal cross beside,
What time the angry water flood
Of God poured forth its tide
On their devoted Master's holy head,
Till the loud cry proclaimed—" 'Tis finished !"

With breaking heart behold them take
The sacred body down ;
Fit for the tomb the corpse they make.
The blood-wet, thorny crown,
With careful hand they move from off his brow,
Kiss every wound, and o'er him weeping bow.

They've laid him in the grave ; a stone
Upon the mouth is rolled.
Had ever grief like theirs been known ?
Shall earth again behold
High hope so crushed ? " We deemed," they cry, "'twas he
Israel to save, our own Messiah to be."

With faltering steps they homeward hie,
Affection's work is done :
The pale cold moon illumines the sky,
That day's dread course is run.
But oh ! how lonesome that dear home appears—
How strange to weep for him who dried all tears.

Their thoughts are with the buried dead,
Sleep flies their heavy lids ;
The shades of night will soon be fled,
But misery rest forbids ;
And stunned by such tremendous blow,
Each promise they forget, and cling to woe.

EASTER SUNDAY.

<i>Morning Lessons</i> , Exodus xii.	<i>Evening Lessons</i> , Exodus xiv.
Romans vi.	Acts ii. 22.
<i>Epistle</i> , Coloss. iii. 1.	<i>Gospel</i> , St. John xx. 1.
<i>Proper Psalms</i> , ii. lvii. cxi.	<i>Proper Ps.</i> cxiii. cxiv. cxviii.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who through Thine only begotten Son Jesus Christ has overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech Thee, that as by Thy special grace preventing us, Thou dost put into our minds good desires; so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

“This is the feast of feasts,” the great day, the highest festival, the day which the Lord hath made: joyfully therefore the Church summons her whole family together to celebrate it with becoming reverence and gratitude. And great indeed is the cause of her exultation—the power of death is for ever destroyed, Satan is vanquished, the door of life is opened to us, the ransom of our peace has not only

been paid, but the purchase has been accepted, and in pledge and proof thereof the hostage is discharged. Few, very few, it is to be hoped, can remain unmoved on this blessed occasion. It is but a morbid feeling that leads us to delight in melancholy retrospects, or to dwell on images of woe. The heart was made for cheerfulness, and in proportion as we regain the purity and innocence which was forfeited through sin, we become more susceptible of those pleasurable emotions which alone deserve the name of such, because we approach nearer and nearer to Him who is the fount and source of pleasure. A lively and holy joy is not less appropriate at present than were humiliation and sorrow during the previous week; and, in fact, as the latter have been sincere and deep, so will our happiness now be the more sensibly felt.

Nor is that happiness the exclusive portion of any rank or order of Christ's members. Various indeed are the conditions of mankind, and sore is the travail that is frequently given to the sons of men, but none except the obstinately impenitent are precluded from the blissful sensations which the event we now celebrate naturally causes. "High and low, rich and poor, one with another," may, on this high festival, as on Christmas day, rejoice before the Lord, and offer to Him the sacrifice of a grateful heart: for as Christ was born for all, so likewise for all did he rise from the grave, and lead captive death.

The primitive Christians on this day formally

saluted each other with the words, "Christ is risen," and those to whom they were addressed replied, "And hath appeared unto Simon." Our own Church, eager also to declare the blessed news appoints an anthem* to be said immediately after the absolution is pronounced, (for till we have confessed our sins and received a promise of pardon for them, we must not presume to rejoice) which at once expresses the occasion of her joy, its important consequences to ourselves, and the conduct required from us in order to insure the benefits and blessings thus procured for us.

The Collect, in exact accordance with the anthem, instructs us to pray that the good desires raised in our hearts may be productive of good effects on our life and practice. The Second Lesson for the Morning and the Epistle point out the use we should make of Christ's resurrection, shewing that we must die unto sin, and have a new birth unto righteousness. In this new state we must grow in grace, and "use all diligence to make our calling sure;" for, to use the words of the learned and pious Stanhope, "as our first entrance into covenant with God by baptism, which is an emblem of our Lord's death and resurrection, is the spiritual birth of a Christian, so conscientious perseverance in the obedience there covenanted for, is his spiritual life."

* More properly called an antiphony, or antiphon, and signifies a hymn sung in parts, or alternately. Who then can remain *silent* in the congregation and be blameless?

The Christian Easter answers to the Jewish Passover, Christ being the true Lamb slain for the feast ; the first Morning Lesson accordingly narrates the institution of that solemn festival, whereby the type and the antitype are presented to our consideration. The First Lesson for the Evening gives an account of the overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, and the deliverance of the Israelites, a lively type of our deliverance from Satan and the bonds of sin, achieved this day by our Lord's resurrection. The Gospel furnishes us with the full evidence of the resurrection, which is confirmed by the testimony of the Apostle St. Peter, in the Second Lesson for the Evening.

ST. JOHN XX. 1.

*The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when
it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre.*

THE dawn is nearest when the thickest gloom
Wide overspreads the face of sleeping earth;
When the cold air as wafted from the tomb
Creeps through the blood, and checks the tongue of mirth.
 Few but have felt at such an hour
 Possessed by some mysterious power;
 Men would disdain to call it dread,
 And yet, as Nature's self were dead,
We feel an inward awe nor care to speak,
And hail with gladdened eye the morn's first rosy streak.

Oft too when grief lies heaviest on the heart,
And not one ray of hope to cheer us beams;
When one by one our dearest friends depart
And misery's storehouse near exhausted seems;
 When earthly hope of earthly stay
 Has fled like dew at glance of day,
 When Heaven's own hand we deem too weak
 The chain that binds us then to break;
When the drained eye has shed its bitterest tears,
Dark sorrow's night wanes fast, and comfort's dawn appears.

Disconsolate, weighed down with heavy loss,
The pious mourners seek their Master's grave;
Nor can the bloody terrors of the cross
Repress their zeal the honoured corpse to lave
 With their sad tears, and once more spread
 Rich perfumes o'er the sacred dead.
Through the lone path they take their way
 Scarce lit by rising beams of day;
When lo! a mighty earthquake shakes the ground,
The rocks are shivered wide, the lofty hills rebound.

With trembling haste the sepulchre they gain.
What hand unseen has rolled away the stone?
'Tis well. None can their tender zeal restrain,
No footstep lingers near—the watch is gone.
 But ah! no form beloved is there—
 'Twas woe before, 'tis now despair.
They seek with sad and streaming eye—
 In vain they search—when suddenly
Behold there breaks upon their sense amazed
Such radiance as on which ne'er mortal vision gazed.

They start—what means that dazzling light?
The cave of death is glowing bright!
And clothed in robes of spotless white
 An angel's form they see.
“The Lord is risen!” they hear him say,
“Behold the place where late he lay.
Go, tell the brethren, nor delay—
 They meet in Galilee.”

“The Lord, the Lord is risen indeed;”—
The Church hath caught the wondrous news,
And eager heralds rush with speed
The rapturous tidings to diffuse.
Her mourning garb she throws aside,
And fair arrayed as joyous bride,
She raises her triumphant strain—
“Worthy the Lamb which once was slain.”
Man is redeemed, the ransom paid,
Death at the Conqueror’s feet is laid,
His blest return your own assures,
And everlasting life secures.
Lift, mourner, lift the drooping head,
Christ is the first fruits of the dead.
As all in Adam die, so all
To life again shall he recall.
Loud hallelujahs let each lip proclaim—
Join earth, join heaven the glorious song
Waft it, ye gales, all lands among;
Spread it, ye roaring waves!
The dead within your caves
Ye must deliver up.
Sea! land! in trust ye hold
For Him who once was sold,
Who drained the wrathful cup,
The dust now sleeping in your breast.
Glory to God our Saviour blest!
The Cross is now our badge—our highest boast his shame,

MONDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

Morning Lessons, Exodus xvi. *Evening Lessons*, Exodus xvii.

St. Matt. xxviii.

Acts iii.

Epistle, Acts x. 34.

Gospel, St. Luke xxiv. 13.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who through Thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech Thee, that as by Thy special grace preventing us, Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The whole of Easter week was formerly kept holy, but especially the two first days. Unhappily, in our times, these days have lost their sacred character, and degenerated into mere holidays, in which Christian purity and Christian knowledge are utterly lost sight of. The Church, however, is unaltered in her views and in her solicitude for the honour of their Lord; and by her appointed service affords opportunity to her more devout children of keeping alive the holy flame of joyful devotion.

The Collect for this and the following day is that for Easter Sunday. The first Morning Lesson offers for our meditation that type of our blessed Lord conveyed in the manna sent for the nourishment of the Israelites in the wilderness, Christ being the true bread which came down from heaven, "of which whosoever eateth hath eternal life." The first Lesson for the Evening offers another striking type of Christ, in the defeat of the Amalekites by the holding up of the hands of Moses, in which posture his figure represented that of the Cross. The smiting of the rock, contained in the same chapter, from whence issued fresh streams of water, is another obvious type of Him from whose blessed side when wounded should issue that living water which should prove refreshment unto life to all who should taste it. The second Lessons afford full evidence of our Lord's resurrection; that for the Morning giving an historical account of the miracle, while "that for the Evening," says Wheatley, "containing a relation of the lame man being restored to his feet, through faith in the name of Christ, was an undeniable proof that He was then alive."

The Epistle and Gospel are too plain to need comment or explanation.

ST. LUKE xxiv. 21.

*But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed
Israel.*

How often when affliction lays
Its heavy hand upon our head ;
Imperfect faith itself betrays
In sighs by blindness only fed.
We measure God by our own rule,
By human sense his purpose scan,
And though we dare not ridicule—
Deny the wisdom of the plan.

Still "fools and slow of heart" to see,
Let clouds our sky but overcast ;
We cling to joys about to flee,
And shrink with dread beneath the blast.
Complain how heavy is our lot—
God's dealings with us how severe ;
And blind and weak discover not
That mercy glows in every tear.

That by a secret chain he leads
Our erring steps to ways of peace ;
Our souls with heavenly manna feeds,
When earth's provisions seem to cease.

Our garments soiled and stained by sin,
Are whitened oft by sharpest grief;
Till glowing bright and pure within
The shades of woe form soft relief.

Still none correction sweet may deem
While yet the grievous smart is felt;
Nor heed we that the fiery stream,
Is meant th' offensive dross to melt.
But who are we that we should dare
God's holy dealings to arraign?
Did he his own begotten spare?
Lay not His road to heaven through pain?

And thus the weak disciples mourned
Destruction of their hopes, and thought
That God from him his face had turned,
Who Israel's freedom should have wrought.
His mild correction led them right;
He shewed that sufferings were a part
Of that great scheme which brought to light
God's love to man,—Hell's cruel art.

So of the Church her sons have deemed
Her glory set, her beauty gone;
When by fierce foes beset she seemed,
Betrayed, and, like her Lord, alone.

From persecution's fiery brand
They feared she never more would rise ;
Nor saw the blood that stained the land
Her seed should prove 'neath milder skies.

And though the storm that long has slept,
Again should rise with greater rage,
Our God its strength can intercept,
Its wildest furies can assuage.
Purged of defilement caught from sin,
She, like the stone that wrapped the dead,*
From out the glowing flames shall win
The pureness of her glorious head.

While by such means her greater strength,
Her inward peace may be secured,
And firmer based, she spread at length
Her arms o'er all in love assured.
Then having shared his woe, contempt,
Amidst a sinful, careless world ;
Triumphant she, from change exempt,
Shall reign when earth to nought is hurled.

* Cloth made of the fibres of the asbestos being imperishable in fire, was used for preserving the ashes of those whose bodies were committed to the flames. In order to cleanse it, it was necessary only to expose it to that element.

TUESDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

Morning Lessons, Exodus xx. *Evening Less.* Exodus xxxii.

St. Luke xxiv. to v. 13. 1 Cor. xv.

Epistle, Acts xiii. 26. *Gospel*, St. Luke xxiv. 36

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who through Thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life ; We humbly beseech Thee, that as by Thy special grace preventing us, Thou dost put into our minds good desires ; so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect ; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The Epistle and Gospel for this day, like the former, relate solely to the fact of the resurrection,—the evidence of it, and the necessity of our living answerably to our belief of it. The first Lesson for the Morning repeats the Ten Commandments, the chapter having been selected on that account. Moses was, in various respects, an eminent type of our blessed Redeemer. In giving the decalogue to the people he prefigured the greater Prophet whom he

foretold God should raise up in after ages, who should reveal the more perfect will of God, and bring all righteousness to light. In the first Lesson for the Evening, we are led, through the intercession of Moses for the people, when he prayed for their sakes, to be blotted out of the book of life, to look at Him who was really made a curse for us on the fatal tree, that we, through Him, might be restored to God's favour and admitted into eternal life. The second Morning Lesson contains further evidence of the resurrection ; and that for the Evening, the celebrated fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, proves to us the reality of our own.

1 COR. xv. 22.

For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.

ALAS ! how pale and wan !
It is a fearful thing to die,
And cold, insensible to lie
Object of dread perhaps to all we prize ;
By fondest lips no longer kiss'd,
And soon from sight to be dismiss'd,
And hid in pity from affection's eyes
Unfit to look upon.

Loathsome effect of sin !
Disguise it as we will, not long,
Even where love is found most strong,
Can we delight to dwell upon the dead.
The first calm, awful beauty past,
The heart prepares to take its last,
Its saddest look of that from which is fled
All that desire could win.

And we *do* fear the dead,
Or, it may be, the doom which must
Ourselves ere long consign to dust ;
For mark one entering the abode of death,

How awe doth o'er each feature creep,
How still the step as though that sleep
He could disturb—he seems to hold his breath
As he draws near the bed.

See how his eye is fixed
Upon that pale and marble brow !
Each feature sternly set ; and now
The tear that has been struggling to escape
Doth slowly, painfully descend ;
The prisoned sigh doth yet distend
His breast—nor thought, nor fear assumes a shape
So strange the feelings mixed.

And when at last a word
Falls from his lip, 'tis breathed in tone
So low that often those alone
Who there have ta'en their stand, its purport know.
Why murmur thus ? Alas ! the dead
Hear not what friend or foe has said ;
Yet bold indeed were he who there might show
He spoke as to be heard.

Say then if awful thus
In sight of others is our end,—
How must the stoutest spirit bend
At near approach of that most awful hour !

Nature is sensitive, and e'er
Doth dread to wing her passage where
She never yet hath found or rest or bow'r ;
Nor loves she to discuss

Where holy faith is not,
What may her destination be
In those dread realms of mystery.
And oftentimes shelters her in unbelief,
Denies that she can never die,—
Forgot, forgetting hopes to lie,
And in annihilation seeks relief,
While she condemns her lot.

Not so where Christ has shed
His holy knowledge on the soul ;
Firm faith in him can fear control,
And rob the king of terrors of his frown.
“ All die in Adam ”—’tis man’s curse,
Nor will his God the doom reverse :
“ In Christ shall all be made alive ”—the crown
For which the Saviour bled.

Jesus adored and blest !
Thou sinner’s stay, our trust, our God !
Though in the vale of death, thy rod
Shall comfort us : thy holy presence stay.

Oh ! for a heart, a lip to praise
Thy mercy as we ought, and raise,
In terms befitting thee, our grateful lay,
The incense of our breast.

Thou also didst lie dead—
Thy form without its tenant pure,
Yet in thy Father's keeping sure ;
Nor might that hallowed form corruption see.
Hence are our own dear dead made clean
Who die in thee ;—let earth then screen
What sin yet makes its prey—oh, mystery !
That dust is regist' red.

The seed of life is there :
Our God shall quicken it, and they
Who in their grave for ages lay,
Shall at the Archangel's call burst from the tomb.
Mortal shall then immortal be ;
Earth shall his presence fly, and heaven and sea,
That happier may succeed. " Lord Jesus, come !"
Hear we the cry " Prepare !"

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Morning Lesson, Numbers xvi. *Epistle*, 1 St. John, v. 4.

Evening Lesson, Numbers xxii. *Gospel*, St. John, xx. 19.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY FATHER, who hast given Thine only Son to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification; Grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness, that we may always serve Thee in pureness of living and truth; through the merits of the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

It was customary, in former ages, to repeat a part of the solemnity of Easter Day on this, the octave, or following Sunday, for which reason it obtained the name of Low Sunday, being in degree inferior to the last.*

The Collect, whilst it is commemorative of the inestimable benefits which, through the love of God

* In Latin it is called "Dominica in albis,"—that is, the Sunday of putting off the chrysoms; because those who were baptised on Easter Eve, on this day laid aside their white garments or chrysoms, which were given them at their baptism. These were deposited in the churches, that they might be produced as evidence against them, if unhappily they should violate or deny the faith they had professed in their baptism.

the Father, we derive from the resurrection of our Redeemer, reminds us of the cause of His death, and the end of His resurrection; and impressing upon us in the midst of our joy, the lesson of humility, teaches us to pray that we may be enabled to serve God as we ought. The Epistle, in seeming reference to the newly baptized that are "born of God" to use all diligence to "overcome the world" in conformity with their baptismal vow, teaches us that by a true and living faith, we may conquer all obstacles that oppose our Christian progress, and thereby reap the blessed fruits of Christ's resurrection. The Gospel continues the glorious subject of the season,—confirms the legacy of peace bequeathed to the Church, and shows the appointment and authority of its ministers.

The Morning Lesson, in the account of the rebellion and schism of Korah and his company, and its awful punishment, warns us against the sin of insubordination and division, by which the peace and government of the Church are disturbed; and proves to us the heinous nature of the offence in the eyes of God. This portion of Scripture demands our particular attention. Unhappily the sin of schism is so common among us, that it has almost ceased to be considered as such; but let the vengeance here displayed against those who have the sad pre-eminence of being the first on record who were guilty of it, be conclusive on the point. True indeed God no longer makes "a new thing" to punish

it; but He is unchangeable, and that which awoke His wrath in times past, cannot be less displeasing to Him at present. The Evening Lesson, under the image of Israel, united and arranged in beautiful order, secure and undisturbed, and proof against the machinations and wiles of their adversaries, because faithful and obedient, represents the security and blessedness of the Church, whilst its members are closely united under its great Head, Christ, and preserving "the bond of peace and righteousness of life;" and thus silently, but powerfully instructs us not only what we are to avoid, but directs us into those paths which we are to pursue.

ST. JOHN XX. 21.

"Peace be unto you."

PEACE didst thou leave with me, and yet
Can I the Giver and the gift forget
So coldly careless, and so soon ?
So soon enamoured of my care,
Shall my pale brow its sadness wear,
My high hopes fading with that moon,
Whose holy beams so late my joy surveyed,—
Those beams that watched the spot where Christ was laid !

Why should the bliss, the holy fire
That warmed my breast, so soon expire ?
Is pardon of so little worth ?
Or are my sins so slight, so few,
That grace is less a gift than due ?
Is fear more sweet than Christian mirth,
That one who hailed the Saviour from the tomb,
Should turn from joy, and seek again the gloom ?

Peace, thou art not of this sad earth,—
Thine is a holy, heavenly birth ;
And though in Eden thou wert seen,
Thou fled'st affrighted at man's crime,

Seeking again thine own blest clime ;
And ever afterwards had been
Afraid to venture here, had Christ not led
Thyself triumphant when he left the dead.

Peace ! the Lord's latest, choicest gift !
Hear, weary heart, and joyful lift
Thy grateful thoughts from earth to heaven.
For peace, he left his Father's side ;
For peace he bled, for peace he died :
Beware thou then the fatal leaven,
That working in thy breast, would make thee sure,
Thine own created merits could thyself secure.

Peace !—thou art that which all desire,
Should thirst of wealth or fame inspire
Thou art the crown of every toil :
Alas ! mistaken that we are !
We load ourselves so long with care,
So mix us with the world's turmoil
That thou dost 'scape our grasp when all too late
Eternity prevents us at death's gate.

How sweet to him is thoughts of thee,
Who loving not the world would flee
Gladly, like hunted bird, away !
Who, faithful to his duty, still

In patience waits his Maker's will;
And though a tear may sometimes stray,
Though weary with conflicting cares, and pressed,
He murmurs not, nor asks to be at rest.

Rouse then, my heart, recall thy joy,
Let grateful thoughts thy tongue employ,
Nor tire thou of the holy theme,
Which angels cease not to rehearse,—
Man saved from the primeval curse;
A God descending to redeem
A guilty race, and leading captive death,
Grants life, a second time, with his own breath.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Morning Lesson, Numbers xxiii. xxiv. *Epistle*, 1 St. Peter ii. 19.

Evening Lesson, Numbers xxv. *Gospel*, St. John x. 11.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast given Thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life; Give us grace, that we may always most thankfully receive that His inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect for this day reminds us of the twofold end for which Christ was manifested in the world—our redemption from the *power*, that we may be saved from the *punishment* of sin, and then teaches us gratefully to imitate the blessed example set before us; for if our own exertions be wanting even the death of Christ itself will be ineffectual to our salvation.

The Gospel, in close harmony with the Collect, propounding to us the conduct of Christ, animates us to patience under every provocation and injury, and concludes by comforting us as being under the pro-

tection of the Shepherd of our souls, from whom indeed we had strayed, but are now returned in penitence and obedience. The Gospel, continuing the idea, represents that Shepherd speaking in His own words, breathing love and consolation, and inspiring humble confidence and joy, not only to those who are already sheltered in the pale of His fold, or near it, but to those who are yet far off and estranged.

The Lessons are still confined to the subject of Balaam and Balak's attempts against Israel,—the Church of God,—and of their hostility, futile because over-ruled by the providence of their Almighty Defender, whose protection they had not yet forfeited by disobedience. In the Evening Lesson we are more especially taught where our real danger lies, in our own frailty rather than in the strength of our adversaries, and consequently to distrust ourselves. Our worst foes are ever our own evil inclinations, and over these therefore the strictest guard must be unremittingly placed. Temptations may and undoubtedly will assail us, but they can prevail only as we listen to the suggestions of the enemy of our souls, or, neglecting the means of protection offered us, yield to the weakness of our hearts. Balaam in vain essayed to curse them whom God had blessed; but his pernicious advice prevailed to the destruction of those who, throwing aside their allegiance, gave themselves up to the indulgence of their sinful appetites.

ST. JOHN X. 11.

*Jesus said, I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth
his life for the sheep.*

'Tis sweet to sit upon some sloping brow
In the mild sunbeam of the youthful year ;
Inhaling now the balmy gale, and now
The perfumed breath of violets lurking near :
Mark the soft light upon the new-clothed trees,
And hear the song of love upon the breeze.

We cannot gaze on aught our God has made
With other feelings than delight and love ;
The blooming floweret or the humble blade,
The rippling stream below, the clouds above,
The lowing herds, the swift birds on the wing,
Speak all of Him, and sweet emotions bring.

All speak of Him, yet some, more holy thought,
More precious recollections haply wake—
Thou, poor despised bird ! what hopes are brought
To the lone heart which human hopes forsake
At sight of thee ! I love thee, meanest bird,
Linked as thou art with Christ's own gracious word.

Oft when the thought of future want prevails,
And visions of dependence press me sore ;
When fear of age, of mind, of strength that fails,
Wake anxious doubt, my sadness is no more
If thou but cross my path with careless wing,
For more my worth than thine, thou humble thing.

But chief on you, ye gentle flocks, I gaze,
And while with grateful thoughts my bosom swells ;
Through many a sacred page my memory strays,
And from its fount the sweet tear softly wells—
The Lord, the Shepherd of the flock, is mine,
The Lamb of God, eternal and divine.

Unworthy as I am, he deigns to feed,
In pastures of his own, my fainting soul ;
For me, for all, that Shepherd deigned to bleed,
And burst for us the bands of sin's control :
As lamb to slaughter led, no plaint he breathed,
A victim dumb with bloody garland wreathed.

His mercy has received me in his fold,
His care protects me and his love sustains ;
The hireling flees should he the wolf behold,
Deserts the flock whose blood the sheepfold stains ;
The true, the faithful shepherd, shields his own,
Nor leaves one straggling lamb to die alone.

He gathers in his bosom those he loves,
And gently leads the weary with his hand :
While others of his flock whose will he moves
Obey his voice and follow at command.
Lord, in thy mercy make me one of these,
Guide me in holy paths thyself to please.

Thou art the door—oh ! let me enter in,
For safe are all whom thou wilt deign receive ;
In perfect freedom and secure from sin
They shall go in and out, nor aught have leave
To hurt or to destroy ; for from thy hand
No pow'r shall pluck them,—no, not hell's fierce band.

But well, too well, thou know'st, though loving thee,
Though all my hopes are fixed on thee alone ;
How oft my will doth struggle to be free,
How prone to walk in ways that are my own.
How oft my wounded heart and bleeding feet,
Cause me to own my chastisement is meet.

Save me, O Lord, save all for whom thy life
So freely thou didst give, so freely die ;
Let will and duty be no more at strife ;
Hear, hear and answer thou my earnest cry ;
Enlarge thy fold, let none from henceforth roam,
Call all by name and bring each straggler home.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Morning Lesson, Deut. iv. *Epistle*, 1 St. Peter ii. 11.*Evening Lesson*, Deut. v. *Gospel*, St. John xvi. 16.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who showest to them that be in error the light of Thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness; Grant unto all them that are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

In the early ages of the Church it was customary for those converts who had been baptized at Easter the year before, to come the year following, the same day, to the same church, and with grateful offerings and other religious offices, thereby to commemorate their new and spiritual birth, when, ceasing to be children of wrath, they became adopted sons of God. Our Church, partially observing this holy custom, by a general anniversary commemorative of our baptism,

and of the solemn vow we then took, calls upon us this day to remember the profession we then made, and our obligation to live suitably to it. The present Collect, therefore, while it has reference to those who had been newly admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, is applicable to all who have partaken of that holy rite. It has been wisely observed that we may read our duty in our prayers; the Collect for this day is a proof of the accuracy of the observation. By it we are taught that they who would be saved by divine mercy in leading them out of error into truth, must live suitably to the commandments of God; and as the grace that can alone enable them to do this, and to acquire those holy dispositions which accord with a state of redemption and salvation, is the especial gift of Almighty God, to pray earnestly for it in His name who is the accepted and beloved of the Father.

The Epistle has the same object in view. It reminds all who have entered upon their holy profession by baptism, of the vow they have taken to lead a life of purity, and instructs us in several of the main points of our duty. Sententious and lucid, it may, in fact, be considered as an epitome of our Christian obligations, and hence is peculiarly appropriate to the occasion for which it was selected. In the Gospel our blessed Lord himself comforts us by assuring us through his disciples, (for we are inheritors of their promises if we are followers of their steps,) that His resurrection should turn all sorrow into joy, that

though His presence may be removed from us for a time, it is only to ensure it to us eternally.

The Morning Lesson, in language most earnest and persuasive, urges us to obedience to every ordinance and command of God. The Evening Lesson repeats, with slight deviation, the decalogue as it stands in the twentieth chapter of Exodus; and thus faith and practice are shown to be indispensably united, and the whole moral law to be binding on all who have enlisted themselves by baptism under the banner of Christ.

DEUTERONOMY iv. 21.

*The Lord was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that I
should not go over Jordan.*

THERE is a vile and noxious weed
Which strikes its fibres deep and wide,
We scarce can trace which way they lead,
So secret in the earth they hide.
'Twill thrive in poor or richest soil,
'Midst choicest plants will force its way ;
And round more precious roots will coil
Till bloom and beauty quite decay.

We pluck it cautious from the ground
Lest any fibre should remain ;
For if one lurking germ be found
'Twill spring luxuriant again.
And in the heart a weed more vile
The fairest soil will over-run ;
First sown there by the devil's wile
When man by malice was undone.

Detested pride ! no human breast
Escapes thy foul, corrupting taint ;
Thou hid'st in meanest, richest vest,
Makest vile more vile, deform'st the saint.

And oft though anxiously inclined
The noxious guest to dispossess,
We do but check the growth, and find
The source unchanged, the fault though less.

And hearts there are in every age
Who view another's worth as sin;
Forgetful that high gifts engage
More perfect service from within;
That greater talents, greater power,
But higher obligations prove,
And make the error of an hour
Call sterner anger from above.

Hear thou, oh man ! who dar'st upbraid
Thy Maker for his partial way;
As if unjustly in the shade
Instead of in the glowing day,
He had thy greater merit cast :
Hear and distrust thy envious thought,
And learn from one whose name shall last,
How dearly may high rank be bought.

" O Israel ! 'tis for thee I bear
This weight of punishment and woe ;
Israel ! for thee the bitter tears
Do frequent from my eyes o'erflow.

That fruitful land!—no foot of mine
The sacred ground may ever tread ;
Alas ! 'tis His decree—repine
I dare not though these drops I shed.

“Thou, Israel ! shalt possess the land,
Thy eyes behold it and rejoice ;
Alas ! I hoped this aged hand
Had led thee in Jehovah's choice.
Each one beneath his own loved vine
Shall sit in safety and in peace ;
When those bright rays that o'er thee shine
Have kissed the spot where I must cease.

“ I own the punishment is just,
Nor to reproach thee wake the past ;
Could grief the purpose change—in dust
Myself I'd humble still and fast.
It may not be : before your face
My chafed spirit, rash become,
Forgot to glorify His name—
I sinned, and am in sorrow dumb.”

So spake the meekest man that e'er
Th' admiring world again shall see ;
In courage great, in wisdom rare,
The Lord's appointed leader he.

And hearts there were who envied sore
His rank, his power, his mighty deeds ;
See how the scalding tears run o'er !
Mark how his breast with anguish bleeds !

And, oh ! beware, proud, envious man,
Nor tempt what thou canst not fulfil ;
Thou seek'st a blessing—fear a ban,
And leave thee to thy Maker's will.
The humble path is safest, best—
If such appointed for thy race ;
In patience bide, and grateful rest—
Ask not for greatness—ask for grace.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Morning Lesson, Deut. vi. *Epistle*, St. James i. 17.

Evening Lesson, Deut. vii. *Gospel*, St. John xvi. 5.

COLLECT.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men ; Grant unto Thy people, that they may love the things which Thou commandest, and desire that which Thou dost promise ; that so among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prone indeed is the heart of man to evil, and apt to make even the holiest delights occasions of sin. The season from Easter to Pentecost is one of rejoicing ; lest, therefore, we should be tempted to misplace our joy, and prefer objects averse to those of a superior nature, the Church in the beautiful and touching Collect appointed for this Sunday, instructs us to pray that He, who alone can order our unruly wills, will be pleased so to regulate our affections, that amidst a changeable and fluctuating world, our hearts may be fixed where true joys are to be found,

even in heaven, in the presence of our Father and our God.

The Epistle accordingly leads us at once to refer every good and every perfect gift to the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, not even the shadow of turning, who in Himself, His word, and His will, is immutable, who with the word of truth begat us, and, as the Gospel teaches us, by the Spirit of truth guides us. These two portions of Scripture are in such close harmony that an attentive perusal of them is sufficient to shew the connexion between them.

The Proper Lessons are full of affectionate commands, instructions and cautions, none of which are too difficult for us to obey, or too profound for our comprehension with the aid of the Spirit of God preventing and enlightening us; yet not one of which we may hope properly to fulfil or to profit by, through the mere power of our own strength and understanding. A meek unshaken confidence, therefore, is at once the Christian's privilege and his duty. He has his blessed Lord's promise of the divine illumination of truth, and of the assistance of an unerring Guide, and greater is He that is with him than they that are against him. But let no one deceive himself—the humble alone are safe, for they alone are objects of God's favour—the self-righteous and the self-wise but pave the way to their own destruction, and are beheld afar off by Him whose ready aid is reserved for them who trust in Him.

DEUTERONOMY vi. 4.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.

God owns not a divided heart,
His honour he will give to none ;
Who takes his service for his part,
Must make that holy service one ;
Must from his heart each stumbling-block remove,—
Each idol dearer than of hill and grove.

For one alone, the Lord our God,
Of old declared himself to be,
By him his prophet from whose rod
The affrighted waters fled the sea ;
Leaving a path between the crystal walls,
While hushed the voice that deep to other calls.

In union one—one Spirit, Lord—
One baptism, one hope, one faith :
One God and Father, high adored,
E'en as the great Apostle saith ;
Who is above and through all things, in all,
And shall be when the worlds to ruin fall.

Will He then whom the angels praise,
Whom earth and sky and sea obey ;
Will he endure thy partial ways,
Accept the half, nor blame delay
That pauses yet the offering due to bring—
He—great Jehovah, jealous God—sole king ?

No, thou must love the Lord, thy God,
With all thy heart, with all thy soul,
With all thy might ; in thy abode :
His fear must every breast control ;
And thou must teach thy little ones his words,
And sanctify him in thy fields, thy herds ;

Must write them on thy house, thy gates,
Bind them as signs upon thy hand,
As frontlets for thine eyes ;—where waits
Sin lurking, then, thou mayst command
The strength that shall the tempter's power defy,
And over Hell confirm thy victory.

And thou must speak of him at eve
When the faint ray invites to rest ;
Or when thy pillow thou dost leave,
Strong as the eagle from his nest ;
Or when thou walkest by the well known way,
Or seekest shelter from the fervid day.

None better must thou love, than him,
Nor child, nor wife, nor home, nor friend,
Nor power of mind, nor strength of limb ;
None with his image must thou blend ;
The first, the last, thy grateful heart can give,
Is his, and his alone in whom all live.

And he shall recompense thy love,
With peace within, with holy joy ;
Secure thy flocks the hills shall rove,
No mildew shall thy crops destroy.
But still beware, lest careless thou forget,
Whose bounty feeds—to whom thou ow'st the debt.

Are we sufficient then for this ?
In Him who died, who rose again
For guilty man's eternal bliss
We are ; let not His grace in vain
Be given to our need, and we shall rise
Above all earthly cares, all earthly ties.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Morning Lesson, Deut. viii. *Epistle*, St. James i. 22.

Evening Lesson, Deut. ix. *Gospel*, St. John xvi. 23.

COLLECT.

O LORD, from whom all good things do come,
Grant to us Thy humble servants, that by Thy holy
inspiration we may think those things that be good,
and by Thy merciful guiding may perform the same ;
through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

This Sunday and the three following days complete the forty during which our blessed Redeemer remained upon earth after his resurrection. The Church now prepares for her Lord's leaving her by his ascension, "an event," as it has been fitly observed, "sad to sense but of supporting comfort to faith." Accordingly she has enjoined more intense prayer with fasting, and hence this Sunday is called Rogation Sunday, and the three following days Rogation days.* A double motive, however, has

* The word is derived from a Latin word, *rogare*, to ask—and has the same meaning as Litany, which in Greek signifies prayer. These days have borne this name since the middle of the fifth century, when Mamœlaus, Bishop of Vienne, on

caused this command : these additional exercises are designed, not only as a preparation for a due observance of the coming festival of the Ascension, but also to implore the favour of God upon the fruits of the earth now making their appearance.

The Collect, devoutly and humbly acknowledging that all good things, whether spiritual or natural, are the sole gift of Almighty God, prays that He would, by His Holy Spirit, so influence our hearts that both in thought and deed, we may do those things that are acceptable to Him.

The Epistle warns us that the mere hearing of the word, without the corresponding fruits of righteousness, is vain ; that religion, to obtain favour with God, must be founded on love to Him, and shewn in love to man for his sake, and in careful abstinence from every species of iniquity ; that, in short, we must be found conscientiously performing the whole sum of our duty to God, to our neighbours and ourselves. The Gospel shews us how this great end may be obtained, namely, by prayer to God in the name of the Son of God, who in this portion of Scripture gives us every possible encouragement to call upon his heavenly Father, and every consolation that we can require under every condition of life.

The journey of the Israelites through the wilderness the occasion of an impending calamity, appointed extraordinary prayers and supplications to be used in his diocese. In the beginning of the sixth century the first council at Orleans appointed that these days should be yearly observed.

ness is figurative, and represents, as it were, typically, our own passage through the world. In the chosen people, as in a mirror, we behold ourselves, and in what befell them, we are taught to find an application to ourselves. With this understanding the Proper Lessons for this and several preceding Sundays may be considered addressed to ourselves as to those to whom they were originally committed; and as such we must give diligent heed to the many forcible and affecting motives by which they urge us to love and obedience; to dependence and humble trust in Him who is our Guide and Protector, as He was that of the Hebrews of old, amidst all the dangers of our earthly pilgrimage.

ST. JAMES i. 27.

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Oh proud of heart! through ages, still the same
And e'er shall be, weak man, the slave of sense;
Fond of all outward things, and vain pretence,
Thy worthiest worship placing oft in name.

For easier 'tis to live by strictest mode,
Bend the bare knee till callous it become,
Make caves our bed, the forest wild our home,
And tread with bleeding feet the thorny road;

To rob poor nature of due food and rest,
Court pain, and lash with scourge the meagre form,
Bare our defenceless head and brave the storm,
And clothe our shivering limbs in coarsest vest;

Than in retired and simple path to dwell,
No praise desiring but the praise of God;
Budding like simple flower on meanest sod,
Yet freshening all like fountain in the dell:

Than to restrain the darling vice that preys
Upon our heart, or such a victory gain
As shall not win the admiration vain
Of sinners like ourselves, and fix their gaze.

Man would his Maker serve, but more his pride,—
A monstrous thought by Satan's self begot ;
More deadly sin than this assails him not,—
Fame sought in paths which God hath sanctified.

Pure must the Christian be, and humble seen
E'en as the lowly Lord whose name he bears,
Above the world's applause, its fears, its cares,
The soother of all woe, midst woe serene.

Such Christ alone will love, our God receive.
The saintly hypocrite but wakes his ire,
Who offers on his breast unhallowed fire,
And dares himself, yea, e'en his God deceive.

Such meek disciple's name in fame's proud-roll,
With pompous eulogies may not appear,
Yet shall it sound in his enraptured ear
When earth shall shrivel as a parched scroll.

ASCENSION DAY.

Morning Lessons, Deut. x.

St. Luke xxiv. 44.

Epistle, Acts i. 1.*Proper Psalms*, viii. xv. xxi.*Evening Lessons*, 2 Kings ii.

Ephesians iv, to v. 17.

Gospel, St. Mark xvi. 14.*Proper Ps.* xxiv. xlvii. cviii.

COLLECT.

GRANT, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe, Thy only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

A devout observance of the Christian fasts and festivals is highly beneficial, tending as it does to strengthen our faith, and to reduce faith to practice. It speaks but little for the really religious temper of late years, that this holy day has been, and still is suffered to pass as "a common prayer day," as it is called, and without any especial reverence to mark its solemnity. Yet surely it is one which commands our utmost veneration, and may well call forth our best hopes, our utmost wonder and gratitude. And

this would needs be the case if we would but consider that on this day our Lord and Saviour ascended into heaven that he might be our perpetual advocate with the Father: that he is gone to prepare a place for us, and to complete the promise that where He is there should we be also.

In the true spirit of holy joy and love, the Church has framed her sacred offices for the day. The Collect, while it expresses a full belief in this great article of her creed, that Christ ascended into Heaven, prays for grace that we may spiritually ascend with him, and continue to dwell with Him, thereby intimating the life of purity and holiness, which is necessary for the attainment of such blessedness.

The Church, both in the Lessons and Gospel, preaches to us the ascension of Christ in the type and antitype. In the Epistle we are taught not to satisfy ourselves with wondering at the miracle, but to take heed that we conduct ourselves in such a manner that at his second coming, we may behold him with comfort and confidence. The first Lesson for the Morning contains an account of Moses going up into the Mount, to recover the tables of the Covenant and deliver them again to the Jews. Our blessed Lord, when he ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave the gifts of his Holy Spirit to the men of his own choice that they should publish the new law to the world. The second Lesson relates the accomplishment of that which the

former was the type. The translation of Elijah* forms the subject of the first Lesson for the Evening; and the second Lesson, as the Gospel had previously done in the Morning, instructs us what practical improvement to make of the great event which we are celebrating.

The Proper Psalms are easy of application, and tend, as the Psalms invariably do, to quicken and elevate our devotion, and so to exalt and spiritualize our desires.

* The following extract from that forcible writer, Bishop Hall, is too valuable to be suppressed:—"There are three bodily inhabitants of heaven, Enoch, Elijah, our Saviour Christ: the first, before the Law; the second, under the Law; the third under the Gospel: all three in a several form of translation. Our blessed Saviour raised himself to and above the heavens by his own immediate power: he ascended as the Son; they, as the servants; He, as God; they, as creatures. Elijah ascended by the visible ministry of angels; Enoch, insensibly. Wherefore, O God, hast thou done this, but to give us a taste of what we shall be; to let us see that heaven was never shut to the faithful; to give us an assurance of the future glorification of this mortal and corruptible part? Even thus, O Saviour, when thou shalt descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, we that are alive and remain shall be caught up, together with the raised bodies of thy saints, into the clouds, to meet Thee in the air, to dwell with Thee in glory."

ACTS i. 9.

While they beheld, he was taken up ; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

WHEN all we love is sweetest, best,
And we the most desire their stay,
Then oft 'tis Heaven's supreme behest
To call our treasures far away.

And why ? He sees them fit for bliss,
Nor longer strangers lets them roam ;
Or else he sees they yet might miss
The glories of their Father's home.

We grateful feel they "walked with God,"
That now they are "not found" we weep ;
And often towards their blessed abode
Our streaming eye we longing keep.

None ever may their loss supply,
"The chariots of Israel" they ;
"The horseman too thereof," we cry,
Nor for awhile the tear drops stay.

'Twas thus the Apostles saw the Lord
Ascend to his own native skies ;
Saw him, the Master they adored,
Beyond their aching sight arise.

And they had followed with delight,
And still the more could they have seen,
The splendour of that wondrous sight,
Which filled with joy those realms serene.

To us the Spirit has displayed
The glories of that blissful day ;
We see the watchful band arrayed
To guard the entrance from the way,

By angel feet once frequent trod
When man in blooming Eden dwelt,
The fav'rite and the friend of God—
By seraph choirs their brother felt ;

But since his sin for ever closed,
Nor less than God those doors might raise,
There silence, solitude reposed,
And light denied its cheerful rays.

But hark ! what mandate shakes the sky ?
What glorious train approaches there ?
“ Lift up your heads, ye gates,” they cry,
“ Your Lord to usher in prepare.”

Who from that side of sin and woe
May dare to venture such request ?
Who hopes to enter from below
Those mansions of precluded rest ?

"Who is the Lord?" the guard demand,
"The King of Glory, who is he?"
"Lift up your heads," is the command,
"And ye the Lord of Hosts shall see:"

Enough; with loud and joyous shout
The golden portals wide they fling;
And rapt'rous strains within, without,
The mighty conqueror's praises sing.

All heaven re-echoes with the sound,
For angels sighed for man's release;
And these the guard of Eden's ground,
With greatest joy proclaim his peace.

Nor ever more those gates shall close—
To all believers they are free;
Death ranks no more among our foes—
No king of terrors hence is he.

His hand must lead us to those realms,
Nor need we fear his guidance more;
He shews no paths where fear o'erwhelms,
No path where Christ ne'er trod before.

THE SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

Morning Lesson, Deut. xii. *Epistle*, 1 St. Peter iv. 7.

Evening Lesson, Deut. xiii. *Gospel*, St. John xv. 26; xvi. 1.

COLLECT.

O GOD, the King of Glory, who hast exalted Thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

This is called Expectation week, in allusion to the expectant state of the Apostles, who were waiting the fulfilment of that memorable promise of Christ, "If I go away I will send the Comforter to you;"—and truly they needed such Comforter; for, however high hope might be, the loss of their Lord's visible presence was a severe trial. In like manner we ourselves require the consolation and aid of that Holy Spirit, without whom not even our best desires could be quickened into corresponding action.

On this conviction the Collect is grounded. Whilst we rejoice in our Saviour's exaltation, we pray for the fulfilment of His promise that we may be comforted with His Spirit in this life, and be finally received into those blessed regions whither he has ascended, as He said, "to prepare a place for us." That this consummation of bliss may be ours, the Epistle, reminding us that we are living under the last dispensation of religion that will be granted to man, exhorts us to lead such lives, as tending to the glory of God, will ensure the reward of good stewardship to ourselves. That we should not be disheartened under the difficulties or dangers of our Christian course, the Gospel furnishes us with our Saviour's own gracious words of encouragement and consolation in the promise of the Holy Spirit, styled in this Gospel, the Comforter. The original word, Paraclete, has a treble signification—Comforter, Advocate, and Teacher, which holy offices he continues to perform for all the faithful disciples of Christ as formerly for the Apostles. A knowledge of the relationship in which He stands to us supposes an acquaintance with those duties which attach to us—in all our troubles and afflictions we must listen to his consolations, and in patience rest upon the relief he affords us: in the bitter hours of penitence we must trust in Him to plead our cause through the merits of Christ's death, and above all we must carefully attend to His holy suggestions, and faithfully obey the dictates of his will.

The Proper Lessons continue, by the admonitions and cautions given to the Israelites for their conduct through the wilderness, to remind us of the duties attendant upon our spiritual journey through life, and to prepare us for the enjoyment of that heavenly land of promise into which the great Captain of our salvation has already entered.

ST. JOHN XV. 26.

When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

“ I will not leave you comfortless,”
 The holy Saviour said ;
 “ Let trouble ne’er your hearts oppress,
 Neither be ye afraid.”

And gracious was the promise given,
 For great indeed the need ;
 To see, to hear the Lord of Heaven,
 To watch each wondrous deed ;

To dwell in love where love e’er shone,
 Each want, each woe relieved ;
 And not to weep when he was gone,
 And feel themselves bereaved,

Oh ! this were faith that none might shew
 Unless by him upheld :
 Their gentle Master felt their woe ;
 The love that woe impelled.

He called them by the tenderest name
To human anguish known ;
And in the 'orphans' sacred claim
Acknowledged them his own.

For in that simple word alone
How sad a tale is told .
Of wrongs that bid the young heart groan—
Of love for ever cold !

Yes ! bitter are the woes that wring
The early mourner's heart ;
But sorrow strikes her keenest sting
When child and parent part.

Another friend we yet may meet,
A brother, sister, find ;
But never love again so sweet
As child and parent bind.

And he had said in years before,
" Your orphans leave to me ;"
So now from pity's richest store
He pours his sympathy.

They have beheld their Master rise
In glory to his home,
And heard from out the same bright skies
That he again shall come.

And they believe the blissful word,
For hope and faith are high ;
But still the promise is deferred,
And various ills are nigh.

But he, the Comforter, the Guide,
Their Lord will quickly send ;
And now in patience they abide
The coming of that Friend.

Yet in their thoughts they follow him,
And longing oft they gaze,
Track his bright steps till sight grows dim,
And view him in those rays.

Would we like them could henceforth lift
Our grovelling thoughts above,
Could make our hearts, now passion's drift,
Fit temples for his love.

Help us, O Lord ! our faint desire
Make perfect by thy breath ;
Grant us alike thy holy fire,
And quicken us from death.

WHITSUNDAY.

Morning Lessons, Deut. xvi. to v. 18. *Evening Lessons*, Isaiah xi.
 Acts x. from v. 34. Acts xix. to v. 21.
Epistle, Acts ii. 1. *Gospel*, St. John xiv. 15.
Proper Psalms, xlviii. lxviii. *Proper Psalms*, civ. cxlv.

COLLECT.

GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of Thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of Thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus, our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

The three great feasts of the Christian Church were prefigured by those of the Jewish; the feast of Tabernacles being typical of Christ being made flesh and dwelling among men, is succeeded by our Christmas; that of the Passover by Easter; and that of Pentecost, or the giving of the Law, by Whitsunday; so close and intimate is the correspondence which exists between the New and Old Testament, so essentially the same is the former and the present dispensation, the Christian and the Jewish.

The term Whitsunday is derived from the following circumstance:—Baptism in the early ages of the

Church, was administered only at Easter and Whitsunday, except in cases of necessity. At this time white garments were given to the Catechumens to remind them of the purity of the life they were required to lead, in which garments the new converts were ordered to appear in the Church each day of the week. The propriety of selecting these days for the administration of this holy Sacrament is obvious. As Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification, which great event we celebrate at Easter, so in baptism we are required to die unto sin and to rise again unto righteousness, a new and spiritual birth being given us; while on this day the Apostles were baptised with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and three thousand converts were baptized by them, the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit being conferred with the outward act and sign.

The giving of the Moral Law was attended with circumstances of great terror; but the descent of the Holy Spirit, which was to write a new law in the hearts of men, was without any of those fearful accompaniments. Instead of the dreadful thunderings that shook Mount Sinai, and of the lightnings which threatened destruction to all, a mighty rushing wind indeed was heard, but only as if to arrest attention, and a gentle flame rested on each Apostle; investing them with power by which they should win men to obedience. These extraordinary gifts ceased with the necessity for them; but the ordinary gifts of the Spirit will continue in the Church, according to our Lord's promise, to the end of the world,

through those means which He himself instituted, and committed into the hands of the Apostles, and of His appointed ministers, their successors.

For this reason, Whitsun week has been made, with great propriety, one of the Ember weeks. The Collect, which serves also for the two following days, is framed accordingly, that all the members of the Church, people as well as clergy, may be endued with the gifts and graces, the especial work of the Holy Spirit, necessary for them. The Epistle is the historical account of the wonderful event, the subject of the day; and the Gospel records the promise of the Comforter given by our Lord, and of the blessed effects that should follow His coming. The Proper Lessons, as usual, are most just and appropriate. The first Morning Lesson contains the command of God to the Israelites for the observance of the three great feasts. In the second Lesson, the commencement of the general blessings of the Gospel to the Gentile as well as the Jew, is shown in the admission of Cornelius into the Church. The first Lesson for the Evening is prophetic of the universality and blessedness of Christ's kingdom; and the second establishes the truth of the prophecy in the historical account of the mighty way in which the word of God grew and multiplied.

Proper Psalms are appointed wherein the Spirit of God has clearly testified of Himself, affording additional proof that the work of man's redemption was the preconcerted plan of ages, and the certain but gradual unfolding of divine wisdom and mercy.

ISAIAH xi. 9.

*The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the
waters cover the sea.*

QUICKENING Spirit! God eternal!

By whose help the world was made;
Source of life—of joy eternal!
Homage glad to thee be paid.

Brooding o'er the breast of ocean,
Lo! beneath thy mighty wing
Form was given, and breath, and motion
Unto every living thing.

See the willing waves retreating,
Hills and fertile vales behold;
Gentle flocks on mountains bleating,
Round the bright sun clouds of gold.

Looks of love around are beaming,
Earth enamoured smiles on sky;
Sky with kindling rays is gleaming—
Nature's self is harmony.

Man, the image of his Maker,
Springs from earth endued with life;
Glory of his great Creator,
Mind and body knew no strife.

Sin, indeed, the fair work marring,
Had well nigh his ruin wrought;
Guilty passions in him jarring
To deface that image sought.

Long in error's maze benighted,
Holy Spirit! thou didst strive
Still to save that knowledge blighted,
Which would save his soul alive.

By thy holy inspiration
Godly men were moved to speak;
By thine own, thy blest dictation,
Words were writ that all might seek

Wisdom in the sacred treasure,
Which should mock the hand of Time—
Make its reading our best pleasure,
Spread it, Lord, through ev'ry elime.

Ratify the promise given—
"Knowledge shall the earth o'erspread;"
Knowledge of our Maker even
As the wide waves ocean's bed.

Not alone as once when rushing
With the sound of mighty wind;
Fiery tongues in splendour blushing,
Warmed each breast, inspired each mind;

But, O Lord ! on every creature
Formed, redeemed and sanctified ;
Owing thee both soul and feature,
Let thy Spirit still abide.

Purify our guilty nature,
Move our sluggish hearts and teach ;
Till in perfect height and stature
We the Christian standard reach.

God of comfort ! light bestowing,
God our Saviour's promised guest ;
From our God, the Father, flowing,
Bring us to thy heavenly rest.

Help us in ourselves, our dwelling ;
Help us, Lord, to serve aright ;
Teach the strain that now is swelling,
Hearts that dwell in realms of light.

Guide and comfort ! leave us never
Till to thee we yield our breath ;
Then conduct us where for ever
Ransomed souls have conquered death.

MONDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK.

Morning Lessons, Gen. xi. to v. 10. *Evening Lessons*, Num. xi.

1 Cor. xii.

v. 16 to v. 30.

Epistle, Acts x. 34.

1 Cor. xiv. to v. 26.

Gospel, St. John iii. 16.

COLLECT.

GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of Thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of Thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus, our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

The Monday and Tuesday in this week are festivals only, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday being observed as fasts, and as days of humiliation and supplication for blessings on those who are about to be ordained into any holy office on the ensuing Sunday.

The Epistle for this day relates to the baptism of converts. The Gospel has also been selected with a view to the instruction of the newly baptized, but is nevertheless most important to ourselves. In it

our blessed Lord shews the love of God in sending His Son to save the world, and the necessity and blessing of that faith which enables us to acknowledge and receive Him who was so sent. At the same time he explains the cause why so many would reject the salvation offered them, namely, a love of their wicked deeds which would make men hate the light, and shun the reproof they deserved.

The first Morning Lesson contains the history of the confusion of tongues, in the selection of which the Church would intimate to us that as the knowledge of God and of true religion was lost to us by the spread of idolatry through the dispersion of mankind, so God by the gift of tongues restored that knowledge of Himself, and laid the foundation of a pure and holy religion which should last till the end of the world. The first Lesson for the Evening records the resting of God's Spirit on the seventy elders of Israel for the relief of Moses, on whom the entire care of the Jewish Church had grown too heavy a burthen,—an exact prefigurement of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, and for the same end, as the learned Wheatley observes, that on many and not on one solely the care of all the Churches should devolve. The second Lesson instructs us that all spiritual gifts, without exception, are bestowed for the general benefit of God's Church, and must therefore be faithfully used for the true and proper end for which they were granted.

NUMBERS xi. 27, 28, 29.

And there ran a young man and told Moses and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them.

“Why enviest thou for me ?
Would God that I could see
Each one and all a prophet of the Lord ;
Yea ! would that it were mine,
(Though I the least should shine)
To know that He his Spirit would accord
To all the chosen people of his hand,
That so his knowledge might be spread through every land.”

So spake the meekest man
Whom since the world began
It had beheld. True servant of his God ;
'Twas not of self he thought,
Nor of the wonders wrought
In Egypt's land by his terrific rod :
His zeal was only for his Israel's good,
And His almighty praise in whose great name he stood.

How little like to most
Who greater talents boast,
Or higher rank than others of their race ;

Such think it private wrong,
If those they dwell among
Rise in esteem, or show superior grace,
Forgetting that the good of all is meant,
In every private gift by heavenly bounty sent.

Too well ourselves we love !
Let not our int'rest move
The warm approval of another's rise,
And we with cold disdain,
And e'en with lively pain
Survey success that should have cheer'd our eyes.
Detract from worth, and e'en ascribe to chance
The bless'd result whose glory thus we but enhance.

Say, hath not He a right
Who brought us into light
To grant his gifts as to himself seems best ?
Shall the poor earthly clod
Protest against its God,
And claim it due he should ourselves invest
With rare endowments to another's loss ?—
Is this befitting one whose brow has borne the cross ?

Peace, murmurer, be still—
The Spirit at his will
Divides to each his gifts as each can bear.

In wisdom all is planned,
And each one's portion scanned—
Thou hast thine own appointed part—prepare
That part to fill so faithfully and true,
That with his unction he thy spirit may endue.

Rather rejoice to see
Others preferred to thee,
And more as thou art conscious of desert—
Thy Saviour's cause doth speed
Since thus he has no need
To bid *thee* double energy exert;
And art thou not his servant vowed and sealed?
His glory, not thine own, then must thou wish revealed.

Yea! let each bosom glow
With joy: let praises flow
From ev'ry lip as wider knowledge spreads.
As light becomes not less,
Though new-born realms it bless,
Nor genial warmth, nor life diminished sheds,
So light divine, as brighter grows its beams,
New blessings pours on each, and still more glorious seems.

TUESDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK.

Morning Lessons, 1 Sam. xix. v. 18. *Evening Lesson*, Deut. xxx.

1 Thess. v. 12 to 24.

St. John iv. to v. 14.

Epistle, Acts viii. 14.

Gospel, St. John x. 1.

COLLECT.

GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of Thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of Thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

The Epistle for yesterday related to the baptism of converts, that for to-day concerns their receiving of the Holy Spirit by the hands of the Apostles; this being an appointed time for the administration of the holy rite of confirmation;—that holy rite which all who have duly considered the subject must hold in the highest esteem, and as of the greatest importance. To such persons it will ever be a source of poignant regret and sorrow to behold it lightly regarded, or received in ignorance or indifference, without preparation of heart or steadiness of purpose.

The most favourable opportunity of fixing religious principles in the heart, and thereby of stamping the character through life is lost in such a case; and many, who if charitable attention had been paid them at that time, or if they themselves had made proper use of the advantages then afforded them, might hereafter have shone as the stars in the firmament, may but too probably rise only to everlasting shame and contempt, to bitter weeping and to misery.

The Gospel has a special reference to the season of Easter or ordination, shewing us the difference between those who are duly commissioned shepherds over Christ's Church, and those who would arrogate to themselves that holy office on their own authority.

The first Lesson for the Morning contains the account of the inspiration of Saul and his messengers by the Spirit of God, and the second warns us not to quench that Spirit, or despise the prophecies uttered by Him. The first Evening Lesson, in prophetic terms, shews us how God would, in after times, deal with His people; and the second admonishes us not to believe all who lay claim to the gifts of the Spirit; but to try them first by those infallible rules of faith which shall prove whether they be of Christ or not.

I ST. JOHN iv. 10.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us.

'Tis sweet to be beloved
E'en by the meanest thing ;
And hearts of sternest mould
Will yet to some one cling.
We cannot walk alone
Earth's desert drear and chill,
But claim some kindred heart
To share our good or ill.

Few are so vile but they,
Though careless they appear,
Tenaciously believe
Some breast esteems them dear.
They may not dare to ask
If they deserve such good,
And oft indeed mistake
'Twixt love and ties of blood :

But still the thought exists,
They hold it to the last,
In gay and guilty crowds,
Or in the desert cast.

Much more the gentle heart
Must link itself in love,
As clinging tendrils woo
Support from boughs above.

And oft the shadow we,
'The substance fled, embrace;
Fearing to know the truth
That would the dream efface.
And still we fondly dwell
On what our breast supplies;
And as the light grows strong
The firmer close our eyes.

We benefit receive
The more we love our kind;
For love is Heaven's own stamp
Engraven on the mind.
Love breathes of Eden's bowers,
Bespeaks man's high descent;
The boon once all his own,
But now in pity lent.

But God the source, the spring,
Of love itself the cause,
Sheds bliss on all, but ne'er
From us advantage draws:

Herein indeed is love,
That while we were his foes,
He gave his only Son
To take on him our woes.

We love another oft
Because he loved us first;
As drop melts into drop
By power attractive nursed.
But when our hearts estranged
Refused to own his sway,
Christ gave himself to death,
That death might lose its prey.

Then how should we adore
The God whose name is love;
By tenderness to all
Our gratitude how prove!
Yes, love must be the link
Uniting God and man;
Encompassing about
Creation's widest span.

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TRINITY SUNDAY.

<i>Morning Lessons</i> , Gen. i.	<i>Evening Lessons</i> , Gen. xviii.
St. Matt. iii.	I St. John v.
<i>Epistle</i> , Rev. iv. 1.	<i>Gospel</i> , St. John iii. 1.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast given unto us Thy servants grace by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the unity; we beseech Thee, that Thou wouldst keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, who livest and reignest one God, world without end. Amen.

The Church having presented to us the entire economy of our redemption, now closes the season by this festival dedicated especially to the Holy Trinity.

On a subject so confessedly difficult as the present, remark can scarcely be too concise or too modest. No greater presumption can exist than that of being wise above that which is written. We know no more of God than He has condescended to reveal to us in His holy word, nor can the strongest powers of the human understanding pass the limits prescribed to it by the Almighty, and discover more of that mysterious nature of the Deity than he has thought proper to make known to us. Enough for us, that what God has declared of himself is true. Our duty, therefore,

is to receive with humility and gratitude on His word alone, that degree of knowledge to which, by our own unassisted reason we could never have attained, though in some respects, far from being fully comprehended by our finite and imperfect understanding.

Let not this, however, stagger any one ; for there is nothing unreasonable nor even extraordinary in placing belief in that of which we have no means of personally ascertaining the truth. We receive the testimony of men in many points where the character or knowledge of the persons giving it, is unimpeachable ; and surely the testimony that God vouchsafes of Himself, is not less worthy of belief, nor the confidence which is reasonable in a lower sense, unreasonable in a greater. The Trinity in Unity and the Unity in Trinity, three persons in one God, has been the belief of the Church from the very earliest ages ; and forms the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, on which the whole fabric of faith is built and supported. Nor is the holy mystery shown to us in isolated parts of Scripture only ; it is propounded to us throughout the sacred volume, beginning with the first chapter of Genesis, (which has been accordingly selected for the first Proper Morning Lesson) and ending with the last of Revelations.

In the Collect for the day, which breathes the true spirit of humility, we return thanks to God for the grace that enables us to receive the truth ; at the same time, aware that the sin of pride might lead us to rely upon our own understanding, we earnestly pray to be kept steadfast in the faith, and to be de-

fended from the assaults of the Evil One, which might cause us to err. The Epistle elevates our minds to a contemplation of the awful worship of the One Almighty God in heaven, thrice holy; and arrests our wonder and reverence. The Gospel, which relates the conversation that took place between our Saviour and Nicodemus, conveys in our Lord's own words, the mysterious truth, and offers to the devout and humble mind ample scope for serious and most satisfactory meditation.

The Proper Lessons are all calculated to strengthen and confirm our belief in the holy doctrine before us. In the divine consultation, as it were, regarding the formation of man, contained in the first Morning Lesson, the plurality of the Godhead is intimated; and in the mysterious and awful visitors of Abraham at Mamre, recorded in the first Lesson for the Evening, we recognize the same, for as God the Father has never been seen at any time; it follows that he whom Abraham addressed as Jehovah could be no other than God the Son, whose day the Patriarch might then behold and rejoice. The second Lesson for the Morning especially, in the baptism of our Lord, sets before our senses, in a manner, the sacred truth;—the voice of the Father was heard, the Spirit was seen to descend, while Christ Himself was in the water. In the name therefore of the Holy Trinity, by our Saviour's express command, we are baptized, and dedicated to the service of each, separately and conjointly to our life's end.

ST. JOHN iii. 12.

*If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye
believe if I tell you of heavenly things ?*

FORBEAR, O rash and most presumptuous man !
Reject not what thou canst not understand ;
Nor dare with feeble reason thus to scan,
What of himself God writes with his own hand :
The triune God before the world began,
Or universal ocean owned a strand.

That one in three exists—if doubt remain,
In thine own self the demonstration see :
Soul, body, mind, to thee all appertain,
Each in itself distinct, yet one in three.
Can thy poor intellect this truth explain,
Or finite wisdom solve the mystery ?

Youth, manhood, age :—so runs the allotted space,
That for our course our Maker has decreed ;
Distinct, yet joined so close we scarce can trace
The secret lines that into other lead.
Life, death, and resurrection : one efface
And not the whole were miracle indeed.

Nor is the mystic number e'en confined
To heaven or man—creation owns the same ;
In Nature's works, in science, arts combined,
We trace the three who first the world did frame ;

The painter's skill, thou, music,* solace kind,
Alike your origin divine ye claim.

Heat, light and air, each vital element,
Nature her vast productions ranks in three ;
Earth's meanest thing is with the mystery blent ;
In the winged insects' change the stamp we see.
Morn, noon, and eve to the same law assent ;
Trunk, branch, and leaves compose the stately tree.

O Father, Son, and Spirit—God in One !
Teach us with saving faith the truth to know ;
And as our course in thee we have begun,
So let us daily in thy service grow ;
That when the appointed term is duly run,
We see the Fount whence all these wonders flow.

* In music there is in truth but one chord ; but this chord, (commonly called the common or perfect chord, and considered the basis of music or harmony,) consists of *three sounds*. So also in each scale, there are *three* fundamentals. It is also a wonderful fact, that by the union of two sounds, a third sound is spontaneously produced, which third sound is, if we regard the ratio of its vibrations, the unit to the vibrations of the sounds by which it is produced. The note produced by blowing gently into the flute, or any other wind instrument, produces first, its lowest or fundamental note ; then, by blowing still harder, the twelfth or octave fifth ; and lastly, by blowing very hard, the seventeenth or double octave, to the major-third.

Painting, in like manner, consists but of three shades. In Geometry, a *line* without breadth or depth, is a nonentity, and can exist only in idea, and the same remark is equally applicable to a *surface* ; but when we ascend to the third degree,

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Joshua x. *Epistle*, 1 St. John iv. 7.

Evening Lesson, Joshua xxiii. *Gospel*, St. Luke xvi. 19.

COLLECT.

O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee, mercifully accept our prayers ; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The former part of the year, from Advent to Trinity Sunday, is called the *doctrinal* season ; that of the remaining half, from Trinity Sunday to Advent is termed the *practical*. In the former, the Church propounded to our consideration the Articles of the Creed ; in the latter, she enlarges upon the Commandments ; thus shewing that good works must proceed from sound faith, and that the union of both is indispensably necessary for salvation.

With a view to make us good Christians, by being in reality followers of Christ, the Gospels for this time, and till the approach of Advent, are such as tend to our edification, taking not only the doctrine, but

we perceive in the *solid*, for the first time, a reality which before did not exist. Instances to the same effect in other branches of science, might be multiplied almost without end.

the deeds and miracles of our Saviour, as subjects for our meditation. The Epistles also, are no longer several and distinct, as appropriate to peculiar days, but meet, as it were, in the general stream of religious instruction, thoroughly furnishing us thereby to good works. The Epistles for the first three Sundays after Trinity, are taken from those of St. John, and breathe the gentle spirit of love which so peculiarly distinguished that holy Apostle. They have been selected as being most applicable to those who have lately celebrated so many acts of heavenly love. Of the three following, two are from St. Peter, and one from St. Paul, the whole harmonizing with each other. The rest of the Epistles, though chosen with less regard to particular seasons, relate with equal care to the great business of life,—a due preparation for eternity, by the fulfilment of all Christian duties: with but two exceptions, they are taken out of St. Paul, and keep the exact order of his Epistles.

Faith and practice being then inseparable, the purity of our lives must form the test of our belief, and that for His sake who has done and suffered so much for us. Most properly, therefore, disclaiming all power in ourselves, and attributing the strength to do right to Almighty God, we pray in the Collect that we may be enabled to keep His commandments, that so in *will* and in *deed* we may please Him, and thereby give that proof of love which Christ himself prescribed: "If ye love me keep my commandments." The Epistle accordingly instructs us in the true nature of that love which, being professed for God, manifests

itself in love to our fellow-creatures. The dreadful consequences of a failure in true Christian charity is shewn us in the Gospel, in which fearful glimpse of a future state, we are admonished both as to the manner of our appropriation of this world's goods, and the strict account that will be taken of our conduct in this respect hereafter.

The Proper Lessons, taken from the Book of Joshua, bear the same spiritual application as those previously presented to us. As Moses is a type of Christ, and the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, and their wanderings through the wilderness are figurative of our journey through life, so now Joshua represents the Saviour, the true Jesus, or Joshua (for the name is the same), who leads us into the real land of rest, the heavenly Canaan; and the chosen people are still emblematic of ourselves. We, indeed, like them, have been delivered from bondage; and, like them, we must war against the guilty inhabitants of our heart, under the guidance and banner of Christ, our Captain, if we would obtain that rest and peace, that possession of a heavenly country, which He has procured for His faithful followers and soldiers. Thus, in the spirit of the Morning Lesson, we must destroy and not spare the enemies of our soul,—our evil passions and appetites,—and make no truce with them; while, obeying the admonitions contained in the Evening Lesson, we must persevere in well doing, if we would secure the final blessing of our Saviour and Divine Leader.

JOSHUA XXIV. 29.

And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua, the son of Nun, died.

How glorious, mighty sun ! art thou
When first thou climb'st the mountain's brow !
For ever youthful thou art seen,
Unchanged where change has ever been.
Love's fingers wake thy glowing beams,
And God's bright smile through brightness gleams.
And glorious is thy fervid ray
When through mid-heaven thou keep'st thy way.
But oh ! how lovely when to rest
Thou seek'st the chambers of the west !
What glowing hues ! What gorgeous clouds
Thy widening disc in glory shrouds !
While ocean high his bosom heaves,
Proud of the splendour he receives ;
Woos thy departure, and returns
Thy smile, while in thy gaze he burns.
Thou wert too bright for mortal eye
When reigning in the southern sky :
We owned thy radiance with delight,
But gazed not, dazzled at the sight ;
Owned all the blessings wrought by thee,
Yet shrunk beneath thy fervency.

Now lower sinks thy parting beams,
And broader still thy wide orb seems.
With quickened haste it meets the main,
We look, but see thee not again—
We feel a blank, we heave a sigh,
Gaze on the spot with lingering eye—
The spot where thou hast disappeared,
And feel it as by spell endeared ;
Then turn with pensive step away,
And mourn a friend in parted day.

So at the close of some great life
Renowned in warfare's deadly strife ;
Or one who for his country's good
Has selfish ease, has wealth withstood ;
Or, nobler still, in virtue's cause
Has won a world's—his God's applause ;
We mark each change with anxious eye,
And feel such loss may none supply :
Presume, though with respect, to love
Him who in mid-day soared above
Whate'er our admiration sought
For liberty to clothe with thought.
In him, in his, we claim a share,
Esteem his rights our sacred care ;
And when at last he sets in death,
And, noble still, resigns his breath,
We feel the loss our own and weep
Tears drawn from sorrow's lowest deep.

Youth! wouldst thou Joshua's praises share,
To follow him thyself prepare;
Heed thee while yet the power is thine,
And in the path of virtue shine;
Guard well the promise of thy morn,
And let each grace thy noon adorn.
Firm in thy duty e'er be found,
Nor shrink though dangers may abound.
Still be it thine to lead the way
To realms of bliss and endless day.
Be thou the honour of thy race,
So rise in glory, set in grace;
Then shall the hour that seals thy rest
Be calmest, brightest, holiest, best!

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Judges iv. *Epistle*, 1 St. John iii. 13.

Evening Lesson, Judges v. *Gospel*, St. Luke xiv. 16.

COLLECT.

O LORD, who never failest to help and govern them whom thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love ; keep us, we beseech Thee, under the protection of Thy good providence, and make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reconciled to God by the death and merits of our Lord and Saviour, we are again permitted to approach Him as our Father, and to consider ourselves as His adopted children. Humbly and reverentially intimating this holy affinity in the acknowledgment that, like a parent, He ever helps and governs those whom He brings up in his steadfast fear and love, we beseech Him in the Collect to give us that perpetual fear and love of His name, on which our whole service must be built to be acceptable to Him. As the love and reverence of children for their parents must be habitual and not occasional, so in like manner our obedience and love of God

must be an unchanging principle, the dutiful devotion of a life, and not the exciting exercise of an hour.

The Epistle enlarges on the duty and principle of love, shewing its motive and urging its practice; reminding us at the same time of a judgment still stricter than that of our own heart—the scrutiny and judgment of God: at the same time giving as a proof of the reality of our love, the faithful adherence to His commands. The Gospel, under the parable of the great supper to which the guests though invited refused to come, lays open to us the chief causes that either deaden or entirely destroy our love of God—the love of the world and the pleasures of sense; and appealing to our fears, warns us of the dreadful consequences of such conduct,—a total exclusion from the joys of heaven.

From the Proper Lessons we learn this great truth—that all victories, spiritual or temporal, have but one source, strength through Almighty God. In like manner it proves to us that while our own exertions are indispensably necessary in the conflict between sin and ourselves, we must rely upon God for succour; and in full confidence of His power, resolutely endeavour to humble the most formidable of our enemies. The life of a Christian is a continual state of warfare; and many, and fierce are the foes against whom he is compelled to contend. To shrink from the combat, is to betray our best interests, and to expose ourselves to ruin. The faithful soldier, however, has no need to beseech any one, like Abinoam, to go

up with him to the battle, although the enemies he has to encounter, are far more formidable than ever were Jabin and his host to the Israelites. He has a Leader, who, having, by his single arm, spoiled principalities and powers, and for ever vanquished death and hell, has conferred strength upon His followers which shall make them, through Him, more than conquerors.

The song of Deborah, which forms the first Lesson for the Evening, is one not only of the finest pieces of Hebrew poetry, but is not excelled by the most celebrated hymns in any other language.

JUDGES v. 17.

Gilead abode beyond Jordan, and why did Dan remain in ships?

HARK! 'tis your country's call, ye brave!
Sound the alarm throughout the land;
Shout as your banners wide ye wave!
"God arms the patriot's hand."

Weep not, faint heart, to leave each tie,
Thy country's sacred right art thou;
Dash the fond tear drops from thine eye,
And calm thy troubled brow.

Thy gentle flocks, thy yellow fields,
To feebler hands than thine consign;
Thine be the harvest battle yields—
The grave of glory thine.

The love of country is no name,
No poet's fond and idle dream;
'Tis wisdom's boast, 'tis glory's claim,
And history's proudest theme.

Who lukewarm views his native soil,
Nor bears in her defence a part;
Who slights the sacred ties that coil
 Around the patriot's heart :—

Who loves not more than life the sod
Where sleep the ashes of his sires ;
Whom not the temple of his God
 With holy ardour fires :—

Is manhood's shame, is foul disgrace,
Unworthy both of life and light ;—
Traitor ! go veil thy conscious face,
 Hide thee in darkest night.

The Lord our God is Lord of Hosts,
A man of war, a victor king ;
And angel captains know their posts,
 Nor rest on idle wing.

And did not He who saved the world
Weep o'er the guilty city's woe ;
Weep o'er the vengeance to be hurled,
 Though soon his blood should flow.

Will ye then turn unwilling ear,
Nor aid your country's righteous cause ?
Forbid it all to honour dear,
To virtue's holy laws.

"Great searchings of the heart," oh ! ne'er
For your divisions then be known ;
Such as despise their country's prayer,
Their country shall disown.

While they who rests in glory's grave
Shall live in never-dying fame ;
A nation's tears shall mourn the brave,
And hist'ry guard their name.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 1 Sam. ii.*Epistle*, 1 St. Peter v. 5.*Evening Lesson*, 1 Sam. iii.*Gospel*, St. Luke xv. 1.

COLLECT.

O LORD, we beseech Thee mercifully to hear us; and grant that we, to whom Thou hast given an hearty desire to pray, may by Thy mighty aid be defended and comforted in all dangers and adversities; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

It were a sad mockery to utter the words of the Collect for this Sunday without a corresponding feeling; but we ourselves are to blame, and not the Church, if, while supposing us to have profited by her instructions, she supplies us with suitable expressions of prayer, we have neglected that culture of the heart, and that government of our passions which are alone compatible with "a hearty desire to pray." Charitably, however, assuming that such has not been the case, and that in truth and sincerity we desire to address ourselves to God, she instructs us to beseech him that he would defend and comfort us in all dangers and adversities, well knowing that the Christian course is ever one of difficulty and peril; and that the disciple must not hope to escape

that which his blessed Lord was content, for his sake, to encounter.

The same Scriptures which have revealed to us the God whom we must love, have also cautioned us against the Evil Spirit whom we must fear. In the Epistle we are warned of this enemy, and shewn how we may escape him, namely, by humble distrust of ourselves, by avoiding his temptations, and placing firm trust in that Almighty Being who, we are assured, careth for us. The virtues particularly inculcated in this portion of Scripture are humility, that firm dependence upon God which precludes all undue solicitude for the things of this life; sobriety, which consists not merely in a temperate use of the creatures which God has given us to enjoy, but also in the government of our passions and desires in general, and, lastly, watchfulness whereby we may not be surprised either through our own neglect, or the infirmities of our nature.

The Gospel most affectingly confirms this merciful disposition of God towards us; showing us, for our comfort, that even the wanderer from the fold, the sheep strayed into the wilderness, is an object of solicitude to the heavenly Shepherd, who, not waiting for his return, seeks him that may restore him in safety, and having rescued him from the enemy, confers joy even upon the angels.

The efficacy of fervent prayer and the duty of thanksgiving for mercies received are shown to us in the Proper Morning Lesson, where the joy of Hannah

on the birth of her son so earnestly besought from the Lord, is painfully contrasted with the evil consequences recorded arising from the indulgence and misplaced lenity of the weak but otherwise holy Eli. In the Evening Lesson we are taught from the beautiful example of the child Samuel, the advantages of early piety, and also warned as parents against that fatal remissness in not correcting the errors of our offspring which cannot fail to end in misery, and perhaps in the destruction of both parties.

I SAMUEL iii. 1.

And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli.

How few who far have trod life's thorny way,
Would measure back their steps and ask to stay.
Yet who, disgusted with the ways of men,
Loves not in childhood to behold again
The guileless truth, the pure ingenuous mind,
The image once our own, of all our kind ?
Loves not to trace, though oft with aching heart,
A time, when like a child, he knew no art ;
Knew not a thought he laboured to conceal,
Knew no desire he dared not to reveal ;
Knew not the care that manhood's brow must dim,
And thought the world was made for love alone and him.

Oh, holy sight ! a young and lovely child,
A sight e'en precious to the Saviour mild.
Linkèd less to earth than heaven's pure skies,
How shines the Deity in those mild eyes,
Refulgent, full of life and beaming love,
Where never passion yet with duty strove,
Free wave the curls above the pencilled brow,
The light blue vein meanders through the snow
Of those fair temples tinged with roseate hue ;
Softer the tints than painter ever drew.

Mark those sweet coral lips with dew o'erspread,
The white teeth springing from their crimson bed ;
Those cheeks where blend the lily and the rose,
And morning's brightest blush serenely glows ;
The mild expression of that smiling face,
The look of innocence, the limb of grace.
These wake delight though tempered oft with awe—
Speak still of Eden's bliss—of Eden's broken law.

And there are times when sight, when thought of youth,
Rouse keen reproach, and tell unwelcome truth ;
Yet may we gaze, and better grow the while,
Become in heart a child and cease from guile.
Like him, the precious loan devoutly lent
With all a mother's love, a saint's intent
To Israel's God, we docile too may learn,
And in each call the voice of God discern.
Unwearied we may promptly too obey,—
" Speak, for thy servant heareth," we may pray ;
Like him each awful message faithful give,
Grow in God's favor, in his service live,
Shine in a dark and disobedient age,
The sinner warn, the careless mind engage ;
By bright example justify our God,
And turn from guilty hearts his just and angry rod.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 1 Sam. xii. *Epistle*, Rom. viii. 18.

Evening Lesson, 1 Sam. xiii. *Gospel*, St. Luke vi. 36.

COLLECT.

O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy; that Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal: Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord. Amen.

Faith and holiness form the ground-work of all the services of our Church; an assertion which the peculiar parts under notice for this Sunday eminently confirm.

The Collect is singularly beautiful and instructive. Full of humility as becomes the prayer of dependent and frail creatures, full of dutiful obedience and trust as becomes that of children whose Father is God Almighty, it embraces all the wants of our earthly state, all our desires as regards the future, closing in the name of Him, through whose merits alone we are made the adopted sons of the Father.

The Epistle, whilst it admits that this present life is one of trial and suffering, encourages us to bear with patience and fortitude our allotted burden, by directing our view to a glorious eternity. It reminds

us that all creation, as well as ourselves, partakes of the consequences of the Fall, and waits with us in hope for that perfect redemption purchased by Christ for us—the resurrection of our bodies—when all things shall be renewed. The Gospel, in the words of our blessed Lord, excites us to be kind, forgiving, and compassionate one towards another, that we may resemble Him in whom dwelleth happiness; for without dispositions suitable for heaven, heaven itself would be no abode of bliss for us.

The Lessons are very instructive and interesting. In the rejection by the Israelites of God for a king, contained in the first Morning Lesson, and in the conduct of that king whom they had desired, as related in the one for the Evening, we are furnished with an awful proof of that inconstancy which arises from a want of faith, and which causes us to refuse the guidance of the Almighty. The dangerous tendency of temporal advantages and prosperity to alienate the heart from heavenly things, to betray us into the grossest neglect of duty, and the most daring acts of presumption, are also shewn us in a striking manner. Whilst Saul was lowly in his own eyes he was chosen by the Almighty to be king over His people Israel; and had he continued humble, the divine favour had continued to follow and support him. Intoxicated, however, with power, he threw off his allegiance to God, and trampling upon His commands, for ever forfeited the light of His countenance and the blessings of His protection.

I SAMUEL xii. 17.

Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I will call upon the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain that ye may perceive that your iniquity is great.

How beauteous is the sight!
The yellow harvest bends its head
Graceful beneath the breeze,
Swelling like waves on ocean's bed
When the soft hours of eve are led,
And trembling 'midst the trees
Gleams in the moon's calm light.

Season supremely blest!
'Mid light and fleecy clouds serene
Majestic sailing high
The blue ethereal deep is seen,
Forming sweet contrast oft between
The livery of the sky,
And purity's white vest.

The sun from his bright car,
While smooth and silvery waters scarcely move,
High in his course in heaven
Casts wide a look of purest love,
And all around, beneath, above,
Return the gay smile given,
And joy is spread afar.

Soft blows the gentle gale
Diffusing fragrance from its wing,
And tempering noon's mid ray.
Thin vapours cross that glowing ring,
And light and shade alternate fling
O'er earth, and now display
Her bosom's charms, now veil.

If man might e'er presume
Upon his Maker's love 'tis now,
When all denotes his care.
Food crowns the mountains' sloping brow,
Food waves in smiling vales below ;
And health and youth prepare
To gather and consume.

"The sickle to the corn,
To-day the harvest must begin ;"
But, lo ! the thunder rolls.
How terrible the tempest's din !
Did prophet say we also sin ?
From centre to her poles
Earth's shuddering breast is torn.

Swift opes the lurid cloud ;
Peal answers peal ; the vivid light
Gleams through the awful gloom ;
While rain and wind and hail unite

The promise of the morn to blight,
Make fruitful earth her tomb,
Her ruined hopes—her shroud.

Is then our God unkind
That seeming gifts his creatures mock ?
Shame on the daring thought !
His love prepares the yellow shock,
Bids earth her ample stores unlock—
We set his word at nought,
And disappointment find.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 1 Samuel xv. *Epistle*, 1 St. Peter iii. 8.

Evening Lesson, 1 Samuel xvii. *Gospel*, St. Luke v. 1.

COLLECT.

GRANT, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance, that Thy Church may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The prayer that we offer for the Church collectively is in reality a prayer for each individual separately; for the repose and security of the body is the welfare and happiness of the members. We shall do well then to utter this comprehensive prayer with the earnestness of personal interest as well as with that diffusive and fervent spirit of charity which embraces all who compose the Church, for the glory of Him who is its Head.

The promise of Christ to His Church generally, is that He will be with it to the end; nor can any promise of His return to him void. Particular churches, however, may forfeit their blessings; for our highest privileges are conditional, not absolute:

their continuance depends upon the performance of our part of any covenant into which God may have graciously entered with us. That this great calamity may not befall us, the Apostle enforces on us in the Epistle the duty of unanimity, insured by the exercise of those gentle virtues which are the fruit of Christian love. In the Gospel we behold the Church under the figure of a ship at sea. Christ, in that spiritual ship in which we are embarked with Him, still teaches us by his commissioned servants, the promised fishers of men; still, by His presence, though invisible, gives efficacy to their endeavours exerted at His command. Hence it behoves us, like the disciples who heard his precious words "to forsake all and follow him." True indeed we cannot like them walk in his visible steps and join ourselves to his blessed society, neither can we hope to imitate them, as they imitated their divine Master. We can, however, still follow his doctrine and learn of him, and taking Christ for our director and guide, may follow his example and walk even as he walked. He has set before us the perfect pattern of love, meekness, humility, and patience. If cultivating these we put away the spirit of wickedness, pride, discontent, and whatever is inimical to our Christian profession, then may we truly be said to have forsaken all and to have become his disciples.

In the Proper Morning Lesson we behold, in the case of Saul and the Amalekites, the danger of executing the commands of the Almighty partially; and

must take warning how we deceive ourselves by performing only such parts of our duty as are agreeable to us, and neglecting those which run counter to our inclination. In the Evening Lesson, which is one that can never be read without delight and admiration even where its spiritual application is not perceived, we behold in the glorious triumph of the youthful David, a type of that still greater conquest to be wrought by the holy Son of David, our blessed Redeemer, over the power of sin and Satan; and may draw from it a proof of God's continual care for the protection and welfare of his Church in all ages and under every dispensation.

1 SAMUEL xvii. 56.

And the King said, Enquire thou whose son the stripling is.

SEE! ranged in battle's dread array
The hostile armies stand;
The taunting challenge every day
Insults the chosen band.
Stout hearts are there, and arms, and men of might,
But none who dares the boaster to the fight.

They measure strength by strength, and feel
As warriors alone;
Their trust is in a bow of steel,
In bravery their own.
But lo! the blasphemy which moves them not
Draws the Deliverer to the destined spot.

“Thou com'st to me with shield and spear,
With buckler and with sword;
I meet thee in the name and fear
Of Israel's living Lord!”
So spake the shepherd youth and future saint,—
The legions heard, yet stood aghast and faint.

Oh! beauty is a lovely thing,
And awful e'en is found,
When youth and virtue fling
Their freshness too around.
'Tis then an impress of the hand divine,
Where God's own glories still distinctly shine.

Look on those graceful limbs, firm knit,
Yet pliant as the bough ;
See dignity and sweetness sit
Upon that polished brow.
The eye that sparkles with etherial fire,
Kindling love's gentlest flame, repressing ire.

The rose is on his downy cheek,
Soft waves his glossy hair ;
No fresher hues the morning streak
Than those which sparkle there.
No weapon in his hand—the small smooth stone
From out the pebbly brook is his alone.

And soon that haughty, scornful chief
A headless corpse is laid ;
The stripling's arm has brought relief,
A nation's ruin stayed :
For God was with him to direct the blow,
And punish Satan in the giant foe.

'Twas faith and holy zeal which won
That conquest o'er the strong;
Christian! for thee the deed was done,—
Join thou the grateful song:
God saved his early Church by David's hand,
That David's Son should vanquish hell's proud band.

And shall the youthful soldier shrink
Th' unequal war to wage?
Subdued by worldly passions, sink,
Or fear the tempter's rage?
Let faith like David's in his heart be found,
And every foe, like his, shall bite the ground.

What shame shall then the soldier stain
Accustomed long to arms;
Who of life's conflict dares complain,
And heeds the vain alarms
A conquered enemy presumes to spread;
But impotent in rage, a captive led.

Up! clothe thee with the armour bright
Of righteousness and truth!
Follow thy Captain to the fight,
Nor let the deeds of youth
Tarnish the hoary crown that thou shouldst wear,
And turn the victor's shout to mute despair.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 2 Samuel xii. *Epistle*, Rom. vi. 3.

Evening Lesson, 2 Samuel xix. *Gospel*, St. Matt. v. 20.

COLLECT.

O GOD, who hast prepared for them that love thee, such good things as pass man's understanding. Pour into our hearts such love toward Thee, that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

There is scarcely any Collect more beautiful, or one which appeals more directly to our best wishes and feelings than the present. As in the Collect for last Sunday we prayed for the peace of the Church on earth, so in this we pray to be made partakers of the joys of the Church in heaven; while with that comprehensiveness, devotion and wisdom which mark all the prayers of our Liturgy, we are taught how to obtain that felicity which not even hope itself can adequately conceive. The promises of eternal bliss, won for us by our blessed Redeemer, exceed indeed all that imagination can frame; but of this we are certain—they can be enjoyed only by

those whose hearts are prepared by a love of God for the attainment of them ; for happiness can be conferred by no state, consisting as it does entirely in our inclinations and tastes being fitted for its reception.

The Epistle accordingly reminding us of the obligation of our baptism to put away all our corruptions, and to lead a godly life, urges us, in the strongest terms, to conform ourselves to Christ's example, dying to sin and living to righteousness ; thus corroborating the great truth that without holiness no one can see God. The Gospel, in the same spirit, warns us, on the authority of our Lord himself, against placing religion in mere external observances. It again enforces the great principle of universal love, charity and forbearance, binding the moral law in an enlarged sense upon us, by His explanation of the spirit of the sixth commandment, and shewing us that a failure in love towards man is an effectual bar to a participation of that bliss which eternal love has prepared for the faithful in heaven.

The Proper Lessons speak the words of most serious admonition to ourselves. That for the Morning, by the frightful excesses to which the least entrance to sin may lead, shews us in the sad instance of one so eminent for his piety and virtue as the holy David, the necessity of the most vigilant circumspection over our looks and thoughts. There is perhaps no instance on record that teaches us a deeper lesson

of humility than the fall of David. Eminent for piety, endowed with the finest qualities both of mind and heart, beloved of God and honoured by men; a single act of indiscretion led him into a depth of guilt which astonishes the most depraved. Not only to the men of his own day, but to those of all others has the unhappy monarch given cause to blaspheme. Would that all, however, instead of dwelling on his guilt, would imitate his penitence; that, self-convicted of sin, they would humble themselves as he did, till through contrition and prayer like his, they too might receive the joyful assurance that God had put away their sin. Instead of rash censure or weak surprise, let us learn to distrust ourselves; and before we presume to pass the bitter sentence of condemnation upon him, let us be well assured that our conscience will not turn upon ourselves in the words of the Prophet and proclaim, "Thou art the man!"

The fearful consequences of guilt either directly in our own persons or to others connected with us, are strikingly exemplified in the Evening Lesson. David's sin was indeed pardoned; but his punishment was not remitted. In his agonizing lamentation for his beloved but wicked Absalom we see not only the grief of the parent for the loss of a favourite son, but the anguish of a pious mind at the unprepared state of that unhappy offender. He had been an instrument in the hands of God of chastisement to his father; and parent and son are alike

punished in his premature death. So little has the sinner to urge against the strict justice of God, so greatly may the most favored of his servants fear his impartiality. Domestic troubles or public disorders are ever the attendants of a departure from virtue, nor can returning prosperity, on our repentance, be entirely unalloyed in feeling, or perfect in degree.

2 SAMUEL xix. 2.

And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people ; for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son.

“O ABSALOM ! my son, my son,
Would God I'd died for thee !”
Such was the plaint of Israel's king
Who wept that victory.
And ever as he went he cried,
“O Absalom ! my son,
Would thou wert living, and thy sire
His weary course had run.”

We stand amazed at such fond grief
For one so lost to shame ;
For one so dead to gratitude,
So worthless of his name.
Oh ! guilt, that thus a son could lead
A parent's heart to wring ;
And wound the anointed of the Lord,
His father, and his King.

Could he forget the gentle care
That every want supplied,

From tender infancy to youth
 Who ne'er a wish denied?
A lengthened life had been too short;
 Such goodness to repay;—
Accursed influence of sin
 That could his heart betray!

Heap up the stones of infamy
 Upon th' unhallowed grave!
Let him not lie as princes lie,
 As sleep the fallen brave.
Another and another fling—
 Sure thou canst not allow
Such deeds as Absalom's—but hold—
 That rebel son art thou!

That rebel son thy conscience tells
 Thou hast for ever been;
Thou hast despised thy Father's laws,
 Unholy and unclean.
And spite of all his love and care
 Hath leagued thee with his foes:
Ingratitude more base than his
 Thy callous nature shews.

“Would God that I had died for thee!”
 The holy monarch cried:

Thy blessed Redeemer, guilty soul,
To save thee really died.
Go hide thy face and smite thy breast
And lowly thus confess ;—
If his foul crime should be abhorred,
Thine merits it no less.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 2 Samuel xxi. *Epistle*, Rom. vi. 19.*Evening Lesson*, 2 Samuel xxiv. *Gospel*, St. Mark viii. 1.

COLLECT.

LORD of all power and might, who art the Author and Giver of all good things; Graft in our hearts the love of Thy name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect for this Sunday stands almost unrivalled for the importance of the matter it contains, the perspicuity of its style, or the beauty of its composition; as such, not one throughout the whole liturgy is more familiar to us, and more generally estimated. As that for last Sunday breathed the most fervent aspirations for the bliss passing man's understanding which God has promised for them who love him, so in this we pray for that heavenly temper of divine love and its practical fruits which shall ensure its attainment. In full faith we acknowledge in it the Lord to be Almighty, the Lord of Sabaoth, or Hosts, the thrice holy, the Lord Jehovah; matchless in power, in goodness, and in

mercy ; the source, the growth, the completion of our spiritual as of our temporal life—our reconciled God through our Lord and Saviour.

In the Epistle, which is a continuance of that for last Sunday, the subject of the previous part of the chapter is resumed. Gently accommodating himself to the weakness of those whom he addressed, the Apostle endeavours to convince them of the danger of their former sinful courses, and, through them, of similar danger to ourselves. He then shews the safety and happiness attendant on a life of righteousness, and strongly enforces upon us the obligation and holiness of our baptism, by which we were devoted to the service of God.

The Gospel relates the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, which, from its pregnancy of spiritual reflection, the Church has appointed to be read three times in the course of her yearly service. She would point out to us that the same hand which satisfied the hungry multitude, nourishes us still. That the same compassion which would not suffer them who sought Him to faint by the way, is ever directed towards ourselves, and that the same Omnipotent Power which visibly sustained a part of His creatures, silently though as certainly, through the operations of nature, feeds the countless multitudes of the earth.

The Proper Lessons, in the bitter inheritance of punishment bequeathed to the descendants of the guilty Saul, and in David weeping for the sin into

which pride had betrayed him, afford us an awful testimony that none may abuse with impunity the rich bounties of God, and the talents committed to them ; that impartial justice distinguishes all the divine decrees ; and that no “respector of persons” the Lord will punish iniquity in whomsoever it may be found.

2 SAMUEL xxiv. 16.

*And when the Angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to
destroy it, the Lord repented Him of the evil.*

“It is enough: stay now thy hand:”—
Such was the gracious word
The swift Destroyer heard,
As o’er the holy city waved his brand.

“It is enough”—Oh! wondrous love
That mercy thus awoke
The sentence to revoke,
Almighty Justice had pronounced above.

“It is enough:”—all, all had err’d,
The Shepherd and the flock;
Hearts these as flinty rock,
And pride in him the fatal wish had stirr’d.

“It is enough: not for my sin
My guiltless children slay;”
So future sires may pray,
And oft that contrite prayer shall mercy win.

“It is enough :”—the storm that laid
The harvest to the earth
Is calm'd : a new bright birth
Wakes earth to joy and smiles in every glade.

“It is enough :”—on that bare head
Woe's phial hath been poured ;
Now blessings amply stored
In streams of mercy bountiful are shed.

“It is enough :”—late racked with pain,
Writhing and sick to death ;
Staid is the parting breath,
And health and vigour string the frame again.

“It is enough :”—so speaks our God
In penitence and woe ;
Checking the tears that flow,
And bidding blossoms bud upon His rod.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 1 Kings, xiii. *The Epistle*, Rom. viii. 12.
Evening Lesson, 1 Kings, xvii. *The Gospel*, St. Matt. vii. 15.

COLLECT.

O GOD, whose never failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; we humbly beseech Thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us those things which be profitable for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In the Collect for last Sunday we besought God as Omnipotent, Almighty; in the present we acknowledge that all things are ordered by His providence both in heaven and earth; and in the true spirit of humility, not presuming to decide what is, or what is not good for us, we pray Him to use His own wisdom in putting away from us what would be injurious to us, and to give us what He sees to be beneficial to us. And wise indeed is the prayer, although probably it is often uttered without a correct meaning being attached to it. Creatures of sense, we desire temporal blessings, and for these in thought, if not in words, we are apt at all times to supplicate as those which are best for us. We dread

misfortune, and against this in our own acceptance of the word, it is that we pray.

Sin, however, is in reality the only evil attached to our state; all else are but modified blessings suited to our spiritual condition. That corruption of our nature, that proneness to error which is the effect of Adam's fall, is styled in Scripture the *flesh*; because in losing the divine Spirit—the principle of spiritual life,—we degenerated into mere animal life, and led by sense, became the slaves of our disordered passions and appetites. To restore to us this principle of spiritual life, and to cleanse us from the guilt of original sin, our blessed Redeemer shed his precious blood. By baptism we are first made partakers of this inestimable benefit; and, accordingly, the Epistle strongly inculcates upon us the obligations and duties attached to us in consequence of this our engagement, and forcibly enumerates the high privileges to which a life suitable to it entitles us to lay claim. The extreme earnestness of the Apostles on the subject of baptism, and their repeated mention of it, can scarcely fail to strike even an inattentive reader. We, on the contrary, are apt to lose sight of it altogether, as something belonging to our childhood, which may be put away with other “childish things.” How ought we rather to remember that our vow is still upon us, and that at baptism we were but enlisted into a service which engaged the duties of a whole life, making us as responsible at the last as at the first.

The Gospel instructs us to beware of being deceived by false teachers; and shows us that a mere nominal profession of the faith is ineffectual to salvation. The tree is to be estimated, on the authority of Christ, by the fruit that it bears; and he alone who does the will of God, we are assured on the same word, shall enter into the kingdom of God.

In the Morning Lesson we are warned in the case of Jeroboam, the presumptuous and impious King of Israel, who is so frequently and so emphatically pointed out as he "who made Israel to sin," against the sin of schism: in that of the lying prophet, against deceit, and instructed to adhere faithfully to our lawfully commissioned teachers. The Evening Lesson furnishes us with a remarkable proof of individual providence, and of the care which God takes of his own true prophet in the person of Elijah, as also of the advantages arising from a communion with His appointed servant in the case of the widow of Zarephath.

I KINGS xvii. 5.

*"So he went and did according to the word of the Lord,
for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before
Jordan."*

WHAT though thy duty calls thee far,
Nor ocean fear, nor desert lands ;
For thee there is a guiding star
O'er foaming seas or burning sands.

Remember Cherith's sacred brook,
The ministering ravens see ;
God ne'er his servants yet forsook,
And shall he then abandon thee ?

No : weak in faith and faint of heart,
Commit thy way to Him alone ;
He bids thee go, whose right thou art,
Then dry that tear, suppress that groan.

He in the desert spreads a board,
Through arid lands the streamlet flows ;
The meanest creature at His word,
Its own appointed duty knows.

Go, then, relying on his care,
His plighted word, his tender love ;
Perhaps to save thee from some snare,
Or thy obedience to prove,

He calls thee from each tender tie,
That to thy kindred binds thee fast ;
And safe would hide thee from each eye,
Till every danger be o'erpast.

Trust, trust him then, and fear no more,
He walks the wave, he rules the wind ;
His presence waits thee on the shore,
He guards whom thou must leave behind.

A little while withdrawn from men,
Alone with him in secret dwell ;
His purpose answered once again,
The public voice thy praise shall swell.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 1 Kings xviii.*Epistle*, 1 Cor. x. 1.*Evening Lesson*, 1 Kings xix.*Gospel*, St. Luke xvi. 1.

COLLECT.

GRANT to us, Lord, we beseech Thee, the spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful; that we, who cannot do any thing that is good without Thee, may by Thee be enabled to live according to Thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Unable to command either purity of intention or power of execution, our sufficiency is of God; to Him therefore we are taught in this Sunday's comprehensive Collect to supplicate that whereas without his aid we cannot serve him acceptably, we may be enabled by Him to make His will the law of our lives; the blessed effect of such obedience,—our everlasting felicity—being in contemplation.

The Epistle teaches us to form correct notions of the Church, both under the Law and the Gospel, and instructs us how to act conformably to its direction under both dispensations. Drawing a parallel between our present state in the world, and that of the Israelites of old in the wilderness, it earnestly

warns us of the dangers to which we are exposed, and shews the fallacy of the plea of extraordinary temptation as an excuse for yielding to its strength, since the divine aid is ever at hand if we truly seek it. The Gospel reminds us that we are placed in this life under trust as stewards, who must finally render up an account of their management, in order that they may receive either the condemnation or the approval of their Lord and Judge. It also sets forth to us in a figurative manner the great bounty and goodness of God in the distribution of his gifts; the injustice and unfaithfulness of men in wasting or abusing them, the danger attendant on such perversion of his beneficence, and lastly the best means of preventing these evils, and of retaining those as blessings which were intended to be such.

The Proper Lessons, which embrace some striking passages in the life and ministry of the great prophet Elijah, are exceedingly sublime, arresting the attention by their grandeur and importance, and impressing upon us the most profound reverence for Him who alone is "the God," and whose "still small voice" wins us to love Him when the whirlwind and the thunders of His anger might terrify us into nought. These Lessons indeed are not to be exceeded in dignity or beauty. It would be a great disparagement of the Holy Volume to recommend the perusal of any part of it for mere excellence of style, purity of composition, or boldness and magnificence of imagery: but in a professed age of taste

like the present,—an age, alas ! in which there are readers of cultivated understanding and of critical discernment who have but little religious feeling,—it may not be amiss to draw attention to the Scriptures even on an inferior ground. “The word of God is quick even as a sword to the dividing of the bones and marrow;” and divine grace may make that effectual to salvation which was sought only from motives of curiosity or even of amusement. Nor ought the beauty of the sacred writings to be undervalued by any one, or to create surprise as derogatory to their intrinsic worth and importance. He who gave man the power to clothe his ideas in language to charm his fellow creatures, may well be allowed to clothe his own word in language as far above human composition as His thoughts are above our thoughts; and the devout heart, zealous for His glory, delights in giving Him honor in all things, and in ascribing the superiority due to Him in an inferior respect as in a greater.

I KINGS xix. 19.

And he found Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth ; and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

“ HEARD I aright ? And dost thou deign to call
Me for thy servant, me less worth than all ?
I linger not, but let me first, I pray,
My sire and mother kiss, and I obey.

Without a pang I leave each haunt of youth,
Scenes long endeared by friendship and by truth ;
The tree that sheltered me, the stream that laved,
The vine whose tendrils o’er my pillow waved.

Nay, scarcely those who once that pillow shared,
My pastimes joined, or sister’s treat prepared,
Awake one bitter tear to say adieu—
Not so my father, mother dear, with you.

None will e’er love me as you both have loved,
No love will equal what for you I’ve proved ;
And though all others I should meet again,
If greeted not by you, return were pain.

Your blessings fond shall cheer me on my way,
Smooth every path through which my steps may stray ;
Shall bind me to my God in faith and truth,
Shield me from error, and protect my youth."

Art thou, young man, preparing to depart ?
Make thine the prophet's tenderness of heart ;
The duteous love to earthly parent given
Is pledge of faith to Him who dwells in heaven.

Know that the holy kiss thus fondly pressed,
Shall act as talisman to guard thy breast,
Shall glow upon thy cheek when far away,
In dangers shield thee, and in sorrow stay.

And faint will virtue grow, but thought of home
Shall win thee back and shame thee more to roam ;
Recall midst fatal mirth a mother's tear,
And save from ruin when it hovers near.

And have we not another home on high,—
A Parent tender in the etherial sky ?
Oh ! let us haste his blessing to implore,
That we return to quit his face no more.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 1 Kings xxi. *Epistle*, 1 Cor. xii. 1.

Evening Lesson, 1 Kings xxii. *Gospel*, St. Luke xix. 41.

COLLECT.

LET Thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of Thy humble servants ; and that they may obtain their petitions, make them to ask such things as shall please thee ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In our present imperfect state we are utterly ignorant of what is really conducive to our good or otherwise, and are therefore unable of ourselves even to offer any petition to God with a certainty that it may be acceptable to Him ; or, if granted, that it would be beneficial to ourselves. Under this conviction the Church teaches us in this Sunday's brief but comprehensive Collect, to beseech God so to direct our desires, that our prayers being pleasing to him, he may lend a merciful ear to us while in humility we address him, for the beloved sake of him who is our Lord and Saviour.

Sincerity of heart and holiness of intention are the indispensable requisites of prayer. As to the

matter of our petitions, we can never err so long as we pray for spiritual blessings, for these are the especial and legitimate subject of all our addresses to Almighty God. We are indeed encouraged to tell out all our wants to our heavenly Father; but prayer for temporal good, or what we conceive to be such, should be made sparingly and with perfect submission to the divine will. The Epistle furnishes us with a guide in this respect, instructing us what gifts are really desirable, and therefore most proper to make the subject of our request. In the Gospel we are shewn *where* to offer up our petitions; for, speaking of the Temple whose place the Christian Church now holds, our Lord declares, "My house is the house of prayer." Beware we then how, in absenting ourselves from public worship under every trivial plea that either indifference or indolence may suggest, we forfeit our share in the blessing of Christ's presence. Our own houses and our own closets are properly sanctified by prayer on ordinary occasions, nor will any faithful petition return unanswered to our bosom; but the "gates of Zion" are dearer to God than "all the dwellings of Jacob." Humility also teaches us that it is far more becoming to creatures like ourselves to seek God where he has promised to be found, than to invite Him to draw nigh to us amidst the luxuries and comforts of our own habitation — comforts which have, it may be feared, in great part influenced us to slight his service and disobey his commands. So also our heart,

being sanctified by the Holy Spirit, is the temple of God, and as such must be kept pure and clean ; for whatever tends to defile it, turns the sacrifice we would offer into sin, and our prayer into an abomination.

The Proper Lessons are particularly interesting, and replete with instruction. They warn us to beware of the first risings of evil in our heart, and of the indulgence of inordinate desire, as in the case of Ahab for the vineyard of Naboth ; and shew us in the death of that impious monarch that no threat, as no promise, which proceeds from God can fall to the ground, nor the decrees of His vengeance against sin be defeated by the most wily and careful precautions of men.

1 KINGS xxii. 34.

And a certain man drew a bow at a venture and smote the King.

“How wise or weak,” we cry, “the plan!”
As failure or success befall;
But know, O vain presumptuous man!
It is the Lord that ordereth all.

The lucky chance, the fatal hap,
Of which so oft the careless boasts;
The lot that’s cast into the lap
Bespeak alike the Lord of Hosts.

At random was the arrow cast
That pierced, unerring, Israel’s king;
So other sinners shun the blast
To fall beneath the zephyr’s wing.

God’s watchful eye fills widest space,
His hand directs the fatal blow;
Through him the suppliant’s prayer finds grace,
He warms the friend, or arms the foe.

In vain, alas! we seek to shun
The vengeance he has once decreed;
Nor gloom of night, nor ray of sun
His piercing vision can impede.

No speed, though swift as lightning's flash,
Can safety for a moment yield ;
See how the blood from that deep gash
Bathes, as denounced, th' accursed field.

So sure destruction shall o'ertake
The guilty wretch who God defies,
Who sin refusing to forsake,
The judgment due to sinners flies.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 2 Kings v. *Epistle*, 1 Cor. xv. 1.

Evening Lesson, 2 Kings ix. *Gospel*, St. Luke xviii. 9.

COLLECT.

O God, who declarest thy Almighty power most chiefly in shewing mercy and pity; mercifully grant unto us such a measure of Thy grace, that we, running the way of Thy commandments, may obtain Thy gracious promises, and be made partakers of Thy heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mercy, goodness and power in God, unworthiness and helplessness in ourselves, the inseparable union of faith and practice, form the ground work of every Collect that our Church prescribes for our use. In none, however, is the truth of this observation more fully illustrated than in the present, which is truly one that the penitent would choose for his comfort, one which the more holy aspirant after heavenly joys would delight to breathe in the humility and gratitude of his spirit. Commencing with an acknowledgment that the Almighty power of God is exemplified most clearly in shewing mercy and pity,

we beseech Him to grant us such grace to fulfil His commands, that we may obtain His gracious promises and be made partakers of heaven for Christ's sake.

The Epistle, in close connexion with the Collect, refreshes us with the recollection of our Lord's resurrection—the sign and seal of our redemption and salvation—encouraging us by the example of the great Apostle, to persevere in our Christian course; to turn the recollection of our former sins into a course of more active obedience for the time to come, and finally to ascribe all change in ourselves, all progress in holiness, to the grace of God. The Gospel, which is the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee, in like spirit, warns us against self-righteousness, holding out comfort for the penitent, and inculcating most forcibly upon us, the dispositions that will be most likely to render us acceptable with God—trust in Him, and humility and abasement in ourselves. And much indeed do we need such admonition, such encouragement, for in all things we are but too prone to deceive ourselves. Our penitence is apt to degenerate into slavish fear—our comparative righteousness into presumption: the artful enemy of our souls only shifting his point of attack. But in all seasons our approach to the Deity ought to be marked by one and the same spirit. The proper way, says Stanhope, of a sinner's applying for mercy and grace (and all of us are sinners,) is, not arrogantly to thank God that we are “not as other men are,” but, as the purest of churches hath directed

us, "meekly to acknowledge our vileness, and truly to repent us of our faults."

In the Proper Lesson for the Morning we are led to a spiritual application of the cure of Naaman's leprosy. Sin answers to the loathsome disease in ourselves, which is cleansed alone by the virtue given to the holy sacraments by Christ himself. The Proper Lesson for the Evening, which records the miserable end of the wicked Jezebel, though familiar to our recollection, can never be heard without awe, and a just fear of that divine vengeance against sin, which though it may sleep for a time, will eventually fall in all its terrors upon the head of the offender.

2 KINGS v. 2.

And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel, a little maid, and she waited on Naaman's wife.

" My dear, my native, smiling land !
Must I no more behold
Thy fertile vales, thy swelling hills,
The well remembered fold
Where with companions loved, so oft
In sportive games I played ;
The merriest, brightest thing that e'er
Upon thy green turf strayed.

" O brother, sister, parents dear !
Ye cannot hear me speak ;
Ye cannot see the tears that chase
Each other down my cheek.
'Tis only in my sleep that I
May see each much loved face ;
'Tis only in my sleep that I
May feel your fond embrace.

" No longer at the hour of prayer,
Mother ! I kneel by thee ;
But never is my father's God
Forgotten once by me.

The mem'ry of His precious words
I treasure in my heart;
And putting firmest trust in Him
I check the tears that start

“ When thought of thee, of all I love,
Comes rushing o'er my mind,
And makes me feel the kindness here
Excelled by thine more kind.
For gentle is my servitude,
And could I but forget
What Israel's land still holds for me
I scarce could feel regret.

“ But Israel's God is still my own,
And he will never fail;
And in his mercy sure I trust
Though sometimes doubts assail.
The Father of the fatherless
Is in the stranger's land;
Nor time, nor space, nor change of state
Can cut me from his hand.

“ And strength is mine and peace of mind—
Then why should I repine?
Would not my lord himself exchange
His rank for health like mine?

Oh! would that in Samaria
The Prophet he could see!
For soon his mighty power would heal
His loathsome leprosy."

God loves by simple instruments
To work his wondrous ways;
And precious in his sight are those
Whose life attests his praise.
Thrice happy Naaman! thy house
Contains one He approves;
And gentleness to her, perhaps,
Towards thee compassion moves.

A double miracle shall heal
Thy pride and leprous stain;
And future haughty men shall learn
No word of God is vain.
The simple water blessed by him
Gives second life and health;
Conveys the efficacious grace
Denied to Syria's wealth.

And happy thou, thou tender one,
Though seemingly alone;
Thy father's God, the Lord of Hosts,
Beholds thee from his throne.

Thy pious prayer and holy fear
Have proved thy master's cure ;
And thou thyself to latest time
In honour shalt endure.

And thought of thee shall dry the tear
Of many an absent one,
From home, from friends, too early torn,—
Youth's brightest pleasures gone ;—
Shall teach the fainting heart that oft
Good springs from sorest ill ;
Shall teach the proud there's none too low
God's purpose to fulfil.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 2 Kings x. *Epistle*, 2 Cor. iii. 4.

Evening Lesson, 2 Kings xviii. *Gospel*, St. Mark vii. 31.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve; Pour down upon us the abundance of Thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

The beautiful Collect for this Sunday is dear to the heart of every one whom the grace of God has touched. General in its application, (for who, alas! has not sinned, and who may demand as his *right* the protection he needs?) full of faith and humility, filial in feeling, and embracing all that we require or hope for either in this life or in the life to come, it stands pre-eminent in excellence and utility. Indifference itself can scarcely fail to be moved by it, nor can ignorance misinterpret it;

while devotion gathers fervency from it, and treasures it with gratitude and delight.

The Epistle treats of the superior value and efficacy of the Gospel ministry compared with that of the Mosaic. The law is styled "The letter which killeth," while the Gospel is designated "The Spirit which giveth life:" and for this cause ;—The former exacted duty, but gave no power to perform it: it required perfect and universal obedience to all its precepts, and a curse was passed upon every one who should transgress them; but it conferred neither ability to keep them, nor pardon for the breach of them. The Gospel, on the other hand, relieves us from the fearful malediction of the law, by the sanctifying grace and assistance of the Holy Spirit. It demands from us no more than it gives us strength to perform. Sincere though imperfect obedience is accepted instead of sinless obedience, and, above all, when through temptation we have unhappily fallen, the new and better covenant helps us to rise again by repentance, and blesses us with hopes of pardon. The Gospel which records the miraculous cure of the deaf man, who had also an impediment in his speech, shows us whose gift it is that enables us to understand the word of God, opens our heart to receive its truths, and draws from our lips the prayer of praise and thanksgiving.*

* Bishop Hall's observations on this miracle are so beautiful, that it is matter of regret that they cannot be fully given; the following only must suffice—"Our blessed Saviour

In the Proper Morning Lesson we are warned in the case of Jehu of mistaking specious zeal for true religion, and admonished to distrust our own most vehement exertions in a righteous cause. In that for the Evening, we are encouraged to imitate the more perfect character of the good Hezekiah, and to take for our support amidst threatening calamities, the same Almighty Being who protected him.

by looking up to heaven whilst he performed this miracle, not only reminds us that there was His home and His throne, and the seat of His majesty, and that there the greatest angels adore Him; but teaches us likewise, that there our eyes should be fixed, whence cometh down every good and perfect gift. He did not teach us to say, O infinite God, which art every where; but 'O our Father, which art in Heaven:' there let us look up to Him; there let us acknowledge all the good we receive; thence let us expect all the good we want. In His mouth the word cannot be severed from the success. Our Saviour's lips are no sooner opened in his ephphatha, 'than the mouth of the dumb, and the ears of the deaf are opened.' At once we behold here celerity and perfection; natural agents work by leisure, by degrees; nothing is done in an instant: by many steps is every thing carried from the entrance to the consummation: Omnipotence knows no rules:—no imperfect work can proceed from a cause absolutely perfect."

ST. MARK vii. 34.

*And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him,
Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.*

LORD hear a sinner's earnest prayer :
Give me the hearing ear ;
Awake the penitential tear,
And for thy presence dread this heart prepare.

Say but the word—"Be opened;"
Though gross and heavy groan,
Thee, the numbed sense shall own,
And by thy gentle voice be gladly led.

In mercy touch this heart of stone :
Give me the grace to feel ;
To my dull sense reveal
Each hidden sin ; awake the contrite groan.

What pain to wish to feel, yet be
Incapable of woe !
To dread the debt we owe,
And yet the reckoning shun which sets us free.

Hear, Lamb of God ! thou sinner's Friend,
Saviour ! to Thee I fly ;
By the deep pitying sigh
Thy bosom heaved, to me thy succour send.

I love not sin, nor sinner's ways,
Yet am I far from Thee;
Alas! humility
Ne'er dwelt with love of self, or human praise.

Perhaps my days are numbered,
And my departure near;
How then can I appear
With heart more cold than now the sleeping dead!

In mercy hear, O Lord, forgive;
Hear thou from heaven thy throne,
And turn this heart of stone
To melting wax, and bid thy servant live.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, 2 Kings xix. *Epistle*, Galat. iii. 16.

Evening Lesson, 2 Kings xxiii. *Gospel*, St. Luke x. 23.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY and merciful God, of whose only gift it cometh, that Thy faithful people do unto Thee true and laudable service ; Grant, we beseech Thee, that we may so faithfully serve Thee in this life, that we fail not finally to attain Thy heavenly promises ; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The attainment of everlasting happiness in a future state is the end and aim of all our exertions, and of all our desires in the present : the power to accomplish this by such service as will be accepted of God, is the sole gift of His Holy Spirit. Humbly therefore, in the Collect for this Sunday, we beseech His mighty aid, that by leading a godly life here,—the indispensable qualification of happiness hereafter,—we may not be disappointed of our hope in those promises which God has made to us through our blessed Saviour.

These heavenly promises—the gift and graces of life eternal—the Epistle shews us the Mosaic dis-

pensation in itself considered, could not give. In Christ Jesus alone, the true Mediator between God and man, of whom Moses was but the type, these promises can be made good, and the gift of the Eternal Spirit,—the purchase of His death,—imparted to us. Our Lord in the Gospel pronounces them blessed who were permitted to see the dawn of the fulfilment of these promises, and taking the opportunity of the lawyer's question as to what was necessary to the attainment of eternal life, propounds the two great principles of love to God and love to our neighbours as the sum of our duty, the latter branch of which he illustrates in the beautiful parable of the good Samaritan.

The Proper Lesson for the Morning, which contains an account of Hezekiah's pious conduct on the occasion of the blasphemous menace of Rabshakeh, serves to strengthen our faith in the superintending providence of God Almighty, and to support us under the threatenings of public calamity, whilst it offers for our consolation the way to obtain the divine protection. The holy name of God blasphemed, himself insulted, and his nation threatened with destruction by a formidable and implacable enemy, we behold the pious Hezekiah publicly laying open all his trouble to the Almighty in his Temple, and seeking first the divine protection and blessing before he had recourse to earthly means of defence. His prayer was offered in sincerity, and with the deepest humility, and it was heard. The

virgin daughter of Zion was permitted to laugh the proud blasphemer to scorn, and the monarch and his people were saved. So shall we also be preserved in our greatest extremity if we like him make God our refuge, and seek His assistance with suitable dispositions of faith and humility.

In the Evening Lesson the good Josiah presents us with a pattern of thorough reformation of life, and a faithful return to the service of God, well worthy of our attentive consideration and imitation.

ST. LUKE x. 29.

And who is my neighbour ?

Look not upon a brother's woe
With pitiless or scornful eye ;
Nor like the Levite and the Priest
Pass coldly by.

What if for guilt he suffer now,
A wanderer from his father's roof,
Art thou so free from stain that thou
May'st stand aloof ?

Hast thou ne'er left thy Salem's walls,
The bless'd abode of holy calm ?
Do no reproaches sting thy breast,
Or need a balm ?

Hast thou ne'er sought some idol joy,
Some "city of the moon"* like him ?
Has sin ne'er stripped thee of thy robe,
Or bruised each limb ?

Have demon passions ne'er assailed
To slay thee on life's dangerous road,
That thou with proud unfeeling heart
May'st turn aside ?

* The word Jericho signifies City of the Moon.

Copy thy holy Saviour's love,
The true Samaritan is he—
And pour into his breast the balm
Of sympathy.

Mark with what gentle care *he* tends
Whom sin has wounded, guilt betrayed,
And softly on the sufferer's head
Thy hand be laid.

Conduct him to thy sheltering Church,
The world-worn traveller's safest inn ;
Such mercy in thy direst need
May pardon win.

"Do likewise," was the wide command
The meek Redeemer mildly gave ;
Then quell that heart of pride, and bless
The pow'r to save.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Jeremiah v. *Epistle*, Galatians v. 16.

Evening Lesson, Jeremiah xxii. *Gospel*, St. Luke xvii. 11.

COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, give unto us the increase of faith, hope and charity; and that we may obtain that which Thou dost promise, make us to love that which Thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

On the three great virtues—faith, hope and charity, may be said to hang all the Law and the Prophets, and even the Gospel itself: united, they will ensure eternal life; separated, they lose all efficacy and are dead to us. Faith, it has been strikingly remarked, rests her standard on the whole word of God; Hope takes for her support the promises; while Charity animates us to run the way of the commandments, by which the first is proved sincere, and the latter made rational. Well then do we pray in the Collect for this Sunday, for the increase of these virtues, which bending our will to that of God, fits us for the enjoyment of eternal happiness.

The Epistle, in reference to that spiritual warfare

which must always exist between the flesh and the spirit, directs us what vices to shun and what virtues, on the other hand, to cultivate; thereby presenting us with a faithful standard by which we may each judge of the progress we have made in our Christian course, and of the real state of our souls. The Gospel, which records the miraculous cure of the ten lepers, deserves our most serious consideration. Sin is that leprosy of the soul which infects all, the cure of which can be effected only by the mercy and power of our blessed Saviour; but as one alone out of the ten lepers who were healed, returned to thank their Benefactor for their recovery, so must we be careful lest our ingratitude or indifference number us among the nine, who, accepting the gift, scorned or neglected the giver. We are naturally surprised at their conduct, and ready to condemn them, "and yet," says Stanhope, "if we descend into our own breasts, they are able to reproach us, as Nathan did David, with a 'thou art the man.' Nay," he adds, "thou art worse than the worst of those men, whom thou blamest for forgetting one mercy; for every one of us have received frequent and eminent instances of the divine goodness: no day passes without refreshing our memories by new demonstrations of it, and yet (insensible wretches that we are!) scarce one among us takes care to acknowledge it in any tolerable manner: or make his praises in ease and prosperity hold proportion with his prayers when in misery and want."

The Proper Lessons, which are taken from the prophecies of Jeremiah, may well arrest our serious attention. As no scripture is of private interpretation, so no part of the Holy Volume is to be considered as having exclusive reference to one individual or nation only. The dealings of God towards His chosen people are awful admonitions to all others, and to ourselves especially; for of this we may be assured, if their sins be our sins, their punishment will likewise be ours, and may even, in consideration of the superior advantages of knowledge which we possess over them, be still more severe and exemplary. Our Saviour's words on this head, when, reproaching the men of that generation for their unbelief, he declared that it should be more tolerable in the day of judgment for the guilty cities which divine vengeance overthrew than for them, are so explicit that they can neither be mistaken nor perverted. Nor may his declaration to the same effect be forgotten, that they who profited not by the advantages afforded them, should be deprived of them, whilst to those who yielded the *fruits* of the Spirit, a more abundant measure of the Spirit should be given.

JEREMIAH v. 22.

Fear ye not me? saith the Lord. Will ye not tremble at my presence which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it?

God walks the air, the earth.
 In clouds that ride the mountain's brow,
 In winds that lay the forest low
 His mighty power is seen :
 But thou, O great and glorious sea !
 Art image of the Deity ;
 To thee whate'er has been
 Whatever yet shall be owes birth.

What eye can fathom thee ?
 What mind thy treasures comprehend !
 In thee both love and terror blend
 To charm and awe the soul.
 Life's powers are nourished by thy breath,
 Yet is thy strength, the strength of death.
 Through ages thou dost roll
 Unchanged in might, exhaustless—free.

Light from thy bosom springs,
 By thee light is absorbed again.
 From his bright chambers in the main
 The day-star mounts the wave.

His course perform'd, yon gorgeous cloud
Must form his wide and ample shroud;
 Thou, sea, must be his grave,
Yet safe he rests on morning's wings.

So from his Father's breast
Whence uncreated light e'er flows,
Th' eternal Son for us arose,
 For us his course pursued.
So set within the silent grave,
So back the tomb its captive gave;
 So the last foe subdued,
God shall be all in all, most blest.

Serene art thou, and calm?
What beauty then is thine, great deep!
The winds upon thy bosom sleep,
 Or waking gently sigh;
And as thy rippling waters gush,
Kissing the pebbly shore, the hush
 Of thy low melody
Falls on the list'ning ear like balm.

What means that sullen moan?
O sea! thou know'st the signal well;
From thy low depths the waters swell,
 The winds their wrath unchain.

Now lashing into foam thy sides
 Wild horror on thy billows rides,
 Writhing in sport thy mane,
 And answering groan for groan.

Rage on, thou mighty sea !
 Scourge with thy waves the trembling shore :
 Spread with rude sweep midst louder roar
 The fountains of thy breast.
 Fling wide thy white foam on the beach
 Far as the aching sight can reach ;
 Clothe it as with a vest,
 The garment of thy victory.

Thy idle wrath display.
 Bound by perpetual decree
 Thou canst not pass thy limits, sea !
 Those feeble grains of sand
 Made power by God, thy rage defy.
 In vain to lift thy billows high,
 The force that shakes the strand
 Is futile as thine own light spray.

God speaks : thou dost obey.
 As of thy rage repentant oft
 Thy bosom seems to heave, and soft
 Thy proud waves fitful sigh

Meek as an infant's on the breast,
 Sobbing betwixt uneasy rest
 And passion's fretful cry,
 Smiling midst tears its wrath away.

Man only dares rebel.
 He, he alone disputes the word
 By things insensate promptly heard,
 And proudly steels his breast.
 And oh! foul shame! he coldly slights
 The love which all but him delights;
 Acts the arch-traitor's part,
 And Heaven resigns for Hell.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Jeremiah xxxv. *Epistle*, Galat. vi. 11.

Evening Lesson, Jeremiah xxxvi. *Gospel*, St. Matt. vi. 24.

COLLECT.

KEEP, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy Church with Thy perpetual mercy; and because the frailty of man without Thee cannot but fall, keep us ever by Thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation; through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

The Autumnal Ember season falling about this time, the Collects for this Sunday and the following are framed with reference to that circumstance, and with great propriety, for on the due dispensing of holy orders, the welfare of the Church and its members in great measure depends. Impressed with a full sense of our infirmities, and of the manifold dangers by which we are surrounded, we pray in the Collect for the divine aid, reposing our hope in all humility in the perpetual mercy of Him who is the divine Head of the Church. And sweet is the spirit of Christian dependence, full of comfort, full of consolation. That desire of independence, of liberty miscalled, which but too generally infects us, was the germ of all the iniquity which has overspread the world. Sprung

from the Evil One, and still nourished and encouraged by him, it has ever led to rebellion, to misery and destruction; while the consciousness or hope of the support of a Superior Power has not only imparted energy to our best exertions, but has shed a blissful peace over the soul which has tended alike to virtue and to happiness.

The Epistle and Gospel strictly harmonize. We are taught in both to renounce all for His sake who died for us, to live solely to him, putting away all vain-glory on the one hand, all undue solicitude, all worldly desires, on the other, and to make the service of God our first concern and constant aim.

The obedience of the house of the Rechabites to the command of their father Jonadab, serving as a reproach to the Israelites, and through them to ourselves, is propounded for our consideration in the Proper Morning Lesson. The Proper Lesson for the Evening is an historical account of one of the most daring instances of impiety on record; but let not surprise or indignation be the only feeling excited by the recital, lest, in a degree at least, we be guilty of a similar offence. All Scripture has been given for our admonition and instruction, and to slight the word of God as it has been transmitted to us, is in effect to imitate the impiety of the Israelitish king, and to destroy on the hearth of our hearts that message which, applied to the holy purposes of repentance and amendment, would have been the means of salvation to us.

JEREMIAH XXXVI. 3.

It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil I propose to do unto them ; that they may return every man from his evil way ; that I may forgive their iniquity and sin.

“ SURELY for this will God arise,
And storms that rend the midnight skies,
Or the swift dart by day that flies,
The sinner's doom shall seal.
No longer sure will vengeance sleep,
No longer can he silence keep ;
The punishment the wretch shall reap
Which he deserves to feel.

How often was the warning sent !
Yet did he e'er of sin repent ?
When did his haughty heart relent ?
Who marked one contrite tear ?
Greedy each wicked course he ran
From boyhood's dawn to ripened man—
No, not Almighty goodness can
To chastise him forbear.”

But who art thou who thus may dare
God's awful thoughts with thine compare,
And setting limits to his care

Condemn the lingering blow ?
Art thou, O man, than He more pure ?
Thy word than His more just and sure ?
Thine eye so clean as not t' endure
The sin that He must know ?

Oh ! measure not by thy weak will
What may the cup of vengeance fill ;
Nor climb with daring foot the hill
Where he in glory dwells.
His ways, proud man, are not thy ways,
And what in heart thou blam'st, displays
That which excites the angels' praise—
The devils' awe compels.

God's *love*, in part, all comprehend,
The *power* that heaven and hell can bend,
The *mercy* that made man a friend
And brought a Saviour down :
But neither heaven, nor hell, nor foe,
Nor saint above, nor man below,
His *patience* can e'en faintly know,—
Of wonders yet the crown.

Provoked each day, each minute, hour,
Our deadliest sins have not the power
To draw the clouds of wrath that lour

Upon our guilty head.
"Rising up early," lo! he sends
The ministers of peace, and blends
Persuasion with reproof; intends
To *life* that we be led.

Then shame thee, sinner, and forbear
Thy wretched brother thus to tear;
Ah! rather win him by thy care
To God's forsaken ways.
Think, think how He hath spared thee erst,
And tenderly the faint spark nursed;
Nor smote till he had tried thee first
By all that love essays.

Weep that thou canst so ill discern
The truth befitting thee to learn,
And 'gainst thyself in anger burn
For such defect in love.
Think how each offer thou hast thrown
In scorn away, and humbly own
Had patience not to thee been shown,
Thou too mightst anguish prove.

Spare, spare thy creatures, gracious Lord,
Thy wondrous patience still accord,
O Father, Saviour, God adored,

Our punishment delay.

Help us thy awful threats to fear,

Help us with saving grace to hear,

Help thou the penitential tear—

Lord, help us to obey.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Ezekiel ii. *Epistle*, Ephesians iii. 13.

Evening Lesson, Ezekiel xiii. *Gospel*, St. Luke vii. 11.

COLLECT.

O LORD, we beseech Thee, let Thy continual pity cleanse and defend Thy Church ; and because it cannot continue in safety without Thy succour, preserve it evermore by Thy help and goodness ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The service for this day may be said to be entirely clerical. Our interest in it, however, is not the less on that account, for (and we can never be too deeply impressed with the truth) the safety and welfare of the Church is that of the individuals who compose it, and the purity of the Church collectively is the individual righteousness of its members. We therefore in fact pray in the Collect for our own improvement and our own benefit when we pray for it. Holy as we acknowledge the Church to be, and fully relying as we ought on the promise of Christ to be with it even to the end, we are yet compelled to own that it is the unceasing pity alone of God that can keep it clean from impurity, and defend it from danger. That in short its very

continuance is entirely of His mercy, and this because though its Head be divine, its members are frail and sinful creatures, unstable in all righteousness.

In the Epistle the clerical character in one important office attached to it, that of supplication for others, is beautifully though unostentatiously exemplified in that of the great Apostle of the Gentiles himself, whose zeal in this portion of Scripture, is directed to rouse and animate all ranks and orders of Christians to attain that well regulated internal disposition which will enable us to receive the blessings and to comprehend the mysteries of our redemption through the death of Christ. Nor is this the only instruction the portion before us is calculated to impart. We may learn from it to address ourselves to God on all occasions of trouble and anxiety, both on our own account and others'; to consider no cause of God's as hopeless, though it meet with opposition and persecution; and that patience and perseverance in seasons of adversity, are the gift of God. We are also taught how and to whom to pray, (with the lowly posture* of devotion, to the Father through our blessed Lord,) and directed in the matter as well as in the manner of our prayers,

* "We find no instance in sacred history of any holy man that ever *sate* at his prayers; and this may teach us to avoid that irreverent and indevout practice, which, by our unhappy divisions, hath crept in among us; and to observe the Psalmist's call, to "come and worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker."—*Dr. Hole.*

to the saddest of which must be added thanksgiving.

The affecting portion of the Gospel, the raising of the window's son at Nain, redounding as it does to the glory of our Lord and Saviour, strengthens our trust in him, and furnishes matter of consolation and hope to every believer. That Christ was indeed "a teacher sent from God," was the confession drawn from the lips of a once prejudiced ruler of the Jews, Nicodemus, by the force of the miracles performed by Him; nor was this without justice and reason, for truly, as it has been beautifully expressed, "Miracles are the broad seal of heaven, which is never set to any commission but what comes from God."* Our adversaries are well aware of the importance of this induction, and therefore deny them altogether. Would that they who profess to believe that they were really wrought, would be equally consistent, and so live as such belief and such proofs of divine power, necessarily demand.

The Lessons, though addressed to the clergy, afford abundant materials for our own serious meditation and improvement.

* Hole.

ST. LUKE vii. 11.

Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.

THE city sleeps not in her wonted calm ;
One goeth to his grave, as erst at Nain,
One in the bloom of youth,
A widow's only son.

Father of mercies ! can it ever be
Thou canst feel pleasure in thy creatures' woe ?
Thou who art joy's own fount,
Canst thou delight in grief ?

Just are thy ways and all thy dealings love,
Yet wavering doubts obscure the carnal mind
When thy afflictive hand
Falls heaviest on the just ;

On those who seem least able to sustain
Such weight of woe ; whose sum of earthly joy
Is centered all in one,
And with that one is lost.

We stand amazed, aghast at such a blow,
Cover our own more guilty head, and shrink
From vengeance thus displayed,
Like ruin fearing too.

Almost we doubt thine own eternal word,
Seeing the best confounded with the base ;
 We mark the awful sight,
 And ask—can this be so ?

Alas ! we see in part, in part believe—
Mistake brief pleasure for essential good ;
 Think of ourselves too much,
 Too little, Lord, of thee ;

O'erlook the saints' most holy garbs are those
Which sorrow hath washed clean from worldly stains ;
 That tears are gems that stud
 The presence robes of heaven.

Yet 'tis a painful task to tread alone
Through all the little that remains of life,
 In paths once pleasant made
 By those we loved and lost,—

To lay aside the hope of many a year
Of life's declining moments cheerful made ;
 To cast a look around,
 And find no link, no tie.

Selfish indeed we are, yet few are found
Who value pleasures which are shared by none ;
 The hardened heart itself
 Seeks fellow and a friend.

But they who live as parasitic plant,
Deriving nurture, life from other stem ;
 Withdraw their fond support,
 And woe's last dregs is theirs.

But mark ! the mournful train winds through the streets,
Collecting numbers as it moves along ;
 Men bare their heads and pause,
 And childhood stays its sports.

No pompous panoply of grief is there
To please the living, but to mock the dead ;
 To fix the wandering eye
 And banish juster thought.

In all the sad simplicity of woe
They come,—simplicity that strikes the heart,
 Telling of losses felt,
 Of fate to be our own.

No sound is heard except the measured step
Of those who bear the dead ; or sharp faint cry,
 Or deep convulsive sob,
 Startling the wounded ear.

Was it for this a mother's pangs were borne ?
For this was all a mother's wakeful love ?
 Why died he not when scarce
 She could have mourned his loss ?

No bud, all beautiful as it may be,
Creates in its destruction such regret
 As that which wakes the sigh
 When winds have snapped the flower.

Of other buds fond hope may speak, but ne'er
Again of flower : the ruffled leaves we smooth,
 Replace it on its stem,
 Then mourn the vain attempt.

Weep, weep, thou poor afflicted one ! Wring thou
Thy trembling hands—give grief its fullest scope ;
 Yea, raise those eyes to heaven—
 But lo ! thy God draws nigh.

Silent as Hermon's dews and gentler still,
His balm distils upon thy wounded heart ;
 Oh hear his gracious words,
 And trust thou in his love.

"I am the resurrection and the life,"
Who dies in me to God for ever lives ;
 And thus the Spirit writes—
 "My dead from labour rest."

Let faith then wipe the struggling tear away,
He bids ourselves "weep not," and that same voice
 That bade the young man rise,
 Shall wake a world to life.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Ezekiel xiv. *Epistle*, Ephesians iv. 1.

Evening Lesson, Ezekiel xviii. *Gospel*, St. Luke xiv. 1.

COLLECT.

LORD, we pray Thee, that Thy grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our strength, the very strength to desire to perform our duty, cometh alone from God. Most properly then do we pray in this Sunday's Collect that the divine grace may ever serve as our guide and guard, and enable us consistently and perseveringly to fulfil all righteousness. Humility breathes throughout the Collect; humility and meekness are inculcated in the Epistle as the foundation of all Christian virtues, and of that unanimity which is the bond of peace, and the fulfilment of that command which was the subject of our blessed Lord's last prayer, and his last, best legacy. Unity of heart and mind among Christians is at once their duty, their privilege, and their safety; heavy then is the responsibility incurred by those who

wilfully break it, and tear that asunder which "God has joined together." Meekly and pathetically the Apostle urges us to walk worthy of that calling which has the God of peace for its Author, and whose fruits are the very reverse of that temper which rends the ties of holiness, and spreads confusion, discord, and impiety around. There is but one object of all divine worship, namely, "The one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all," one Redeemer, the head of His mystical body the Church; one Holy Spirit who animates and sanctifies that Church;—one baptism, one faith, and these agree in one, and are one. Beware we then of the sin of schism, which is the dividing of the body of Christ, and making it not one body, but many. Let us judge our state by the infallible proofs of the Holy Spirit, and if instead of the love, peace, meekness, and patience which should distinguish the followers of the Prince of Peace, we perceive in ourselves envy, strife, variance, and contention, leading us to bitter zeal and emulation; let us be warned at once of our danger, and turn into that path which our blessed Redeemer and his holy Apostles have set before us,—the path of unity, concord, and universal good will.

In the Gospel the same lesson of humility is enforced as in the Epistle, (for pride is the source of division,) the promise of reward being given by our Saviour to the virtue, and punishment threatened to

the opposite vice. By it also we are taught through the example of Christ, to be affable, courteous and condescending to all men, even on occasions when their malice leads them to observe a contrary behaviour towards ourselves. At the same time we are instructed to have a due regard for our own safety ; to be wary of the invidious snares of evil men, and to unite the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove in our intercourse with the world in general.

The Proper Morning Lesson, in harmony with the preceding, warns us against that pride which may lurk in the heart under the semblance of humility, accompanying us even in our approaches to the divine majesty, and bringing a curse and not a blessing upon the hypocrite. The Evening Lesson displays in one view the mercy and justice of God, threatening punishment to sin in the person of the offender, but sparing the guiltless connexions of the sinner ; calling all, however, to repentance, and to turn to Him who is abundant in goodness, and who is ready to pardon all who truly seek His forgiveness.

EPHESIANS iv. 2.

*With all lowliness, and meekness, with long suffering,
forbearing one another in love.*

THE martyr's crown, all bloody as it is,
And dropping tears by direst sufferings wrung,
Yet owns a charm ;—who wears it shall be sung
In holy song, and fair renown be his.

And sweet it is for noble hearts to die
In bloody field, their glory for their shroud,
In trust their name in history's annals proud
Shall brightly shine, or wake a nation's sigh.

Mark the pale statesman's brow, with care deep lined,
Himself debarred the joys of social ties,
Life's sympathies he yields, nor painful sighs,
If in his country's weal a tomb he find.

Behold, o'er stormy seas the sailor plough,
He heeds no tempest, nor the billows' rage,
Smiles at the winds, which all their wrath uncage,
So that posterity his daring know.

See, o'er the learned roll the student pore
Through long and sleepless nights without complaint ;
Though sapping life with toil, content, though faint,
So praise be his when he shall be no more.

O'er dry and sterile sands, o'er steepest rocks,
 Exposed to heat by day, by night to cold,
 The traveller seeks new regions to unfold,
 And home foregoes to live in sculptured block.

There is a wreath more difficult to win,—
 One that no eye attracts, no glory gains;
 Yet to acquire demands more costly pains,
 Than fame, ambition's toil, or battle's din:—

The meek forbearance of another's fault,
 Superior merit felt, and yet suppress'd;
 Vexatious weakness doomed to see, yet rest
 Contented, when we might ourselves exalt;

To feel, yet ne'er complain of folly's part;
 Tame down to meanest minds our lofty soul;
 In love our proudest passions to controul,
 Steering our way by charity's own chart.

Saviour of men! 'tis thou, and thou alone,
 Who canst our spirits bow to thy command;
 Lead us in duty's paths by thine own hand,
 And let the Christian's badge in us be shown.

In mercy free us from this proud disdain
 Of what in our weak fancy seemeth low;
 Hear thou our prayer, for thou alone dost know,
 How oft we have essayed, how oft in vain,

Spite of our will, of all thy warnings given,
To curb our haughty heart, and make it meek !
Look, Lord, behold these tears our meaning speak ;
Grant us the love which must be born of heaven.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Ezekiel xx. *Epistle*, 1 Corinth. i. 4.
Evening Lesson, Ezekiel xxiv. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xxii. 34.

COLLECT.

LORD, we beseech Thee, grant Thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and with pure hearts and minds to follow Thee the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

There is a variation in the method of this Sunday from the rest. The Epistle is taken out of the first to the Corinthians, and not out of that to the Ephesians as those for the Sundays next, before and after. This has been accounted for on unquestionable authority,* in the following manner:—The church had anciently proper services on the Wednesdays and Fridays, but especially on Saturdays, when, after a long continuance of prayer and fasting, they performed the solemnities of the ordination either late on Saturday evening,† or early on the following morning. On this account, and out of a charitable feeling to those who had been thus severely exercised, the Sundays following had no public services. They were thence called *Dominicæ vacantes* (vacant Sundays). It appearing objectionable, however, to suffer a Sunday to pass

* Wheatley.

† The Saturday evening was then regarded as a part of the Lord's day.

without any solemn service, the Ordination was held at an earlier hour on Saturdays, and the Sunday had its solemn service like the others. But an inconvenience still subsisted. As these Sundays had no particular service of their own, the service of some other days was used, and this practice continued till proper ones were fixed. The present Sunday is one of these, and had a particular Epistle and Gospel allotted to it, bearing on the solemnity of the time.

The great adversaries of our soul are the world, the flesh, and the devil. These we promised to renounce at our baptism, but the strength to keep that vow lies not in ourselves: it is the especial grace of God which can enable us to acquit ourselves of this or any other solemn obligation. Nor let it be thought that this great truth is too frequently or too earnestly enforced upon us. Pride is the earliest and the besetting sin of our nature, and its power is strongest when we are least sensible of its presence. For this gift of grace we are instructed in this Sunday's Collect to pray, that so being freed from the idolatry and service of sin, we may worship him in purity and truth who is "the only God."

The Epistle accords closely with the Collect. The Apostle makes the grace of God, given through our Lord, the subject of thanksgiving, and shewing the blessed effects of that grace, encourages us to wait patiently for the coming of Christ, when the resurrection of our bodies, and the life everlasting, shall

be the consummation of all that He has purchased for us. There is also a seeming allusion in it to the necessity that exists of spiritual teachers: the qualifications requisite for such as are to be ordained, as the "being enriched with all utterance and in all knowledge," and being "behind in no good gift," are likewise intimated.

The Gospel, (which relates the insidious question proposed by the lawyer to our Saviour respecting the great commandment of the law, and in return Christ's enquiring of the Pharisees as to the nature of the Messiah,) instructs us how to obtain this gift of life, namely, by keeping the commandments, ever looking to Him who though the son of David, is the Lord from heaven, very God and very man. In selecting this portion of Scripture, the Church probably intended to propose to the newly ordained ministers the example of their blessed Master, when in all wisdom, promptitude, and gentleness he answered the questions proposed to him, whether maliciously or ingenuously put.

The Proper Lessons, though primarily addressed to the Jews, are most applicable to ourselves. We too, like them, have received a continuation of mercies and deliverances; and we also have been ungrateful and rebellious. Condemnation therefore of them is condemnation of ourselves; with this severer reproof, that our knowledge of God's will as much exceeds theirs as the mid-day light exceeds that of the dawn.

EZEKIEL xx. 12.

Moreover, also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.

SWEET Sabbath bells ! oh how I love your chime !
 How grateful listen as the gale
 Wafts your sweet peal, and through the vale
 Tells to the rustic cottager the time
 When to the house of God he may repair,
 And humbly glad pour forth his soul in prayer.

What sweet associations are combined
 With those dear sounds which now I hear !
 As soft they steal upon the ear,
 Loved forms and tender thoughts possess the mind ;—
 Our mother's smile, our father's serious look,
 The envied task to bear the sacred book.

The well remembered pew, the burnished nails
 By rosy finger counted o'er ;
 The blooming forms now seen no more ;
 The pictured walls, the holy altar's rails,
 In quick succession rise before our view,
 And with the drops of love our eyes bedew.

But let the passing weakness be forgot—
 What though our steps no longer press
 Our native haunts ; perchance not less
 Have we rich cause to bless our gracious lot :
 And though past scenes may wake a saddened thought,
 Each church of Christ is dear where Christ is taught.

How little those who live in paths of ease,
 Or tread the maze of pleasures round,
 Can think how weary hearts rebound,
 As that loved chime comes swelling on the breeze ;
 Can think what joy to hail a Sabbath morn—
 The day of rest to all with labour worn.

Yes, toil is recompensed by such a day ;
 The sun smiles brighter in the dell,
 The flowers emit a sweeter smell,
 The birds seem gayer on each verdant spray ;
 And nature's face assumes a look so calm,
 It yields alike to want and woe a balm.

As through the rows of dead we track our way
 To the loved fane where once they knelt,
 Our ruder passions seem to melt ;
 No painful tribute to their loss we pay,
 We breathe alone the calm of their repose,
 Nor less the joy of life our bosom knows.

But who may tell the happiness within,
 Or paint the beauty of the sight ?
 The pastor stands in robes of white,
 Garb of the Lord, whose precious blood from sin
 Must cleanse our garments from all earthly stain,
 Ere we can sing with saints the Lamb's own strain.

In fair and decent order all are ranged,
 Devout each look and fixed each eye ;
 The world and worldly passions die,
 And earthly cares awhile for heaven are changed :
 Yea, world ! thou hast no habitation there—
 That house is God's, the house of peace and prayer.

Sweet day of rest ! lit with thy Maker's smile—
 Thee the exulting angels sang
 Till with the sound creation rang—
 Born from perfection's breast, from love erewhile
 Superior spirits' undivided boast,—
 Love shared with man now joy of heaven's whole host.

Sweet Sabbath bells ! alas ! how sad appears
 Your sacred call when low we lie
 By sickness held, and sad the sigh
 Ye then provoke, and bitter are the tears
 Which starting to our languid eyes proclaim,
 We feel at length to worship God no shame.

Lord of the Sabbath ! thou who gav'st the day
That it creation's birth might tell,
Who chose it to lead captive hell,
For the descent of truth's eternal ray,
So bless it to our souls, so make it dear,
We reach thy courts above by service here.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Daniel iii. *Epistle*, Ephes. iv. 17*Evening Lesson*, Daniel vi. *Gospel*, St. Matt. ix. 1.

COLLECT.

O God, forasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please Thee; mercifully grant, that Thy holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ever remembering that our greatest danger lies in our fancied strength, the Church never fails to impress upon our mind, as in the Collect for this Sunday, the necessity of distrust of ourselves, and humble dependence upon God: that doctrine so repugnant to the inherent pride of our nature, and which to the "heady and high-minded" appears little less than foolishness. In addition to this we are here taught to pray that we may lead a life of *uniform* obedience, in contradistinction to that partial respect to God's laws with which we are but too apt to be contented. Few are so lost to a sense of religion and of their duty to their Maker as totally to abandon his service; but unhappily it is the study of most to attempt to do that which our blessed

Lord has declared to be utterly impossible. We endeavour to reconcile our allegiance to God with the indulgence of our passions and inclinations and the love of the world; and but too commonly make a sacrifice to Him of that alone which costs us nothing. Comparatively easy indeed would be our Christian warfare if we had to contend only against enemies who rarely assailed us, or whom the slightest resistance was able to subdue. Our foes are those of our own household, the tenants of our own bosom; and these, endeared to us, as it were, by familiarity and custom, are at once difficult of detection, and when known, require our constant vigilance and resolution to dislodge or punish. These are they that the Spirit of God must enable us to conquer, and these being reduced to subjection, our service may become consistent and worthy of our profession.

The Epistle having first made clear to us our utter inability of ourselves to please God, exemplified in the natural state of the Gentiles before the law of righteousness had been promulgated to them by the Gospel, and shewn the happy state of Christians through the Holy Spirit communicated to them, prescribes such a course of life as that for which we have prayed in the Collect; and which, for Christ's sake, cannot fail of being acceptable to God. The Gospel, presenting us with a striking instance of the divine compassion in the case of the helpless paralytic, instructs us to look for the same compassion towards ourselves, who are equally unable as the sick man,

to pursue our course without that powerful word which is vigour to the soul, as it was then health to the body.

The Proper Lessons convey the same consolation as the Gospel: the deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace, and of Daniel from death in the lion's den, being the subject of them. The miracles thus recorded were wrought indeed for the preservation of the faithful servants of the Most High, and we are but too conscious that our claims to protection rest, as concerns ourselves, on very inferior grounds to theirs. Nevertheless the sincere in heart are always objects of the divine favour, and a better righteousness than our own is imputed to us,—that of Christ. The same power which cured the paralytic, formerly forbade the flames to hurt the three children, and the lions to harm the beloved Daniel; and though we must not expect such wonderful interpositions of Providence in our favour, we may rest fully assured that our merciful God will never leave us unprotected when in the execution of our duty; but will certainly, though invisibly, as before openly in the sight of all men, uphold us in danger, and disarm the most appalling terrors of their power to overwhelm us, if it be not His good pleasure entirely to remove them.

ST. MATTHEW ix. 2.

And behold they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed ; and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy, " Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee."

It is a weary thing to keep
 Lone vigils through the livelong night ;
 To woo in vain the balm of sleep,
 And ask yet dread, return of light :
 To press th' inviting couch, yet find no rest,
 Find nought to still the pulse, and soothe the throbbing breast.

To tell day's progress only by
 The measured stroke of yon high tower ;
 For upland breeze in vain to sigh,
 Or fragrant breath of opening flower :
 To share by stinted rule the voice of friend,
 Yet on another's care for comfort to depend :

Feel the extremes of heat and cold,
 The throbbing head, or shivering frame ;
 The trembling nerve of late so bold,
 The suffering that admits no name :
 To loathe the tempting food by love prepared,
 Without one thought of self, too costly to be shared.

To feel the touch of racking pain,
Or languid lie, inert and faint,
When others' claims should make us strain
Each willing nerve : to fear the plaint
Of those we love should reach our quickened ear,
Lurk in the pallid cheek, gleam in the silent tear :

And worse, to read in memory's page
The fatal things which there are writ ;
The varied sins from youth to age—
Those spectres that around us flit ;—
Faithful, too faithful every deed retrace,
And dread that He our God has turned away his face.

But lo ! who stands beside the bed
With gentle look ?—whose words are those ?
“Sinner ! for thee my blood was shed,
For thee that fount of mercy flows.”
'Tis past ! each bitter pang, each fear is o'er,
Frown sickness as it may, death terrifies no more.

For where the Saviour deigns to stand
There must eternal Eden bloom ;
And heavenly gales from that blest land
Shed fragrance o'er the yawning tomb.
Then, Lord, to us be this assurance given,
And health or sickness grant as is the will of Heaven.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Joel ii. *Epistle*, Ephesians v. 15.

Evening Lesson, Micah vi. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xxii. 1.

COLLECT.

O ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, of Thy bountiful goodness keep us, we beseech Thee, from all things that may hurt us; that we being ready both in body and soul may cheerfully accomplish those things that thou wouldst have done; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Christian's life is one of warfare and danger, beset with snares and temptations of various kinds; but there is One, even our heavenly Father, the God of all mercy and goodness, who is ever ready to hear our prayer for assistance, and to stretch forth the right hand of His power to succour us. Seriousness then becomes us, in the execution of our duty, but not less so cheerfulness; for while resignation to the divine will is the commencement of religious obedience, cheerfulness is the perfection of it, and marks not the servant merely, but the child of God. Such is the spirit and meaning of this Sunday's excellent Collect.

The Epistle, in conformity with the Collect, warns us to walk *circumspectly*, thereby intimating the perils that lie in our path. It then admonishes us to avoid excess, in order that we may fully discern our duty, and commands us to rejoice, with devout thankfulness in God's mercy through Christ. The Gospel, under the image of a marriage supper, sets forth that grace of which all are invited to partake; but which the cares or the pleasures of the world cause so many unhappily to reject. At the same time it shews us the danger of intruding ourselves into the divine presence without due preparation. As he who had not on a wedding garment was thrust out into darkness, so will all who are Christians only by profession be excluded from the presence of the great King, the Lord of heaven and earth, at the last day, the marriage supper of the Lamb; for the wedding garment here intended is that purity of mind and life, that universal benevolence, that fruitfulness in good works which are the consequences and evidences of a true faith. To be destitute of these,—and the fault is our own if such unhappily be the case,—is to provoke that terrible sentence, "Depart from me, I know you not!" however conspicuous we may have made ourselves by acts of outward zeal and faith.

The Proper Lessons, which are full of awful warnings against impenitent sinners, must be read with profound attention and deep humiliation. We must apply them to our own hearts and lives, and make them, with God's assistance, instrumental to

repentance and thorough reformation. The Lord has shewn us what He requires from us, nor will He accept of less than He demands. Penitence for past sin, present works of justice and mercy, "and to walk humbly with our God," are indispensable. In the latter expression is comprehended the sum of all religion, being "founded in humility, and built up and perfected in faith and love,—all in, and by, and for Christ our only hope." *

* Stanhope.

EPHESIANS v. 15, 16.

*See then that ye walk circumspectly ; not as fools, but as wise,
redeeming the time.*

O YEAR ! thy course is nearly run,
Fast falls thy yellow leaf ;
Enshrined in clouds the sickly sun
Makes cheerful daylight brief.

Cold heavy rains and winds that chill
Denote thy near decay ;
The pensive red-breasts feebly trill
Their short and plaintive lay.

The gay and laughing hours are gone,
The grove, the thicket mute ;
The few remaining flowers are wan—
E'en saddened seems the brute.

The shrivelled foliage in the dust
Trodden and faded lies ;
Or borne aloft by sudden gust
In whirling eddy flies.

Light fleecy clouds no more are seen,
One dull garb clothes the sky ;
And saddest most when most serene,
The misty eve draws nigh.

The very air is sad, and sad
Is all on which we gaze ;
Ah ! how unlike the season glad
When Summer shed its rays !

But Wisdom has ordained that all
Should man a lesson teach ;
And these dull sounds are nature's call,
Designed his heart to reach.

Her voice is echoed by the Church,
" Redeem the time !" she cries.
Hear it, ye careless ones, and search
What this command implies.

Who can the moments fled redeem,
Or check the flying year ?
Or who against time's rapid stream
An upward course can steer ?

Repentance may recall the past,
More earnest zeal may chain
The fleeting hours, and hold them fast
Till they are ours again.

" Let us walk circumspectly" then,
" As wise" let us be found ;
No more " as fools ;" as Christian men
Let Christian worth abound.

Hear, hear the solemn voice, and heed

The awful truth it speaks—

“So quickly doth existence speed—

So life's last morning breaks.”

Oh! let us then the night beware

Which ends an ill-spent day,

And so our hearts for death prepare,

His voice we glad obey.

The strain of Heaven we then may sing

When newborn worlds arise,

For ever clothed with verdant spring, .

With ever smiling skies.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Habakkuk ii. *Epistle*, Ephes. vi. 10.

Evening Lesson, Proverbs i. *Gospel*, St. John iv. 46.

COLLECT.

GRANT, we beseech Thee, merciful Lord, to Thy faithful people pardon and peace; that they may be cleansed* from all their sins, and serve Thee with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord.—
Amen.

“There is none that doeth good, no, not one,” is the assertion of the Psalmist, and who is he whose conscience does not upbraid him for offences committed, or duties neglected, that he can contradict it? But not the reprobate only, the unbeliever, or the wilful transgressor is included in this condemnation; even the “*faithful people*” of God have great and bitter need to implore “pardon and peace.” Hence we are taught in this Sunday’s comprehensive and admirable Collect, to pray that we, who are advanced in our Christian course, may be cleansed from all our sins, that so we may be enabled to serve God with a “quiet mind,” through Him whose blood alone

can wash away sin, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The blessing of a quiet mind, and its absolute necessity for the performance of our duty, is fully apparent, if we reflect on the horrors of conscience and the distraction caused by fear, contrasted with the calm arising from the hope of forgiveness. As the one incapacitates us from every exertion, so the other infuses life into our endeavours, and is a pledge and foretaste of eternal felicity. They, however, who would secure this blessing, are shown in the Epistle that they must act as warriors against the foes that assail them, putting on the whole armour of God, and being ever watchful at their post; for whilst all needful assistance is promised to them who diligently co-operate with divine grace, nothing will be granted to the slothful and negligent. To render these divine weapons fully efficacious, we must, according to the Apostle's injunctions, add constant and earnest prayer, the success of which is forcibly shown us in the Gospel, which records the healing of the nobleman's son by our compassionate Lord and Saviour, at the earnest intercession of the father.

The singularly beautiful Chapter appointed for the Morning Lesson, cannot be heard with indifference; nor, unless we are wilfully ignorant, can we fail to make its proper application to ourselves. It is indeed so plain, that "he that runneth may read it," and reading, understand. Woe is pronounced against iniquity, and woe will certainly

be the portion of all the workers of it; for the Lord, who "is in His holy temple" hath spoken it, and against that just sentence the whole earth must "keep silence." The Evening Lesson introduces us to the Book of Proverbs, which the Church has reserved as a suitable conclusion of her Proper Lessons for that half of the year which she considers as practical; nor could any have been more appropriately chosen, for heavenly wisdom inspired the inestimable maxims it contains, and the highest earthly wisdom penned them.

PROVERBS i. 8.

"Forsake not the law of thy mother."

MOTHER ! what tender thoughts that name recalls,
Thou bliss of infancy, and manhood's pride !
At thought of thee, how warm the tear-drop falls,—
Tears which e'en stoutest hearts disdain to hide !

Bound with thy name is all we prized in youth,
Home, kindred, early hopes, and brightest joy ;
Each lesson of instruction, virtue, truth,
The only love that never knows alloy.

Thine are the first impressions we receive,
Thine deepest graven, thine the last forgot ;
Pleasure may charm us or misfortune grieve ;
Vice may betray, but ne'er thy image blot.

With thee are mingled all that touched us most,
Sharer of joy, best comforter of pain ;
The love itself of which we after boast,
Is sweeter as it breathes of thee again.

Full many a weary year with me has sped,
My brow betrays what none beheld on thine,
Since, my loved mother, I beheld thee dead,
And saw thee borne within the holy shrine.

Oh ! moment of distress, beyond whate'er
 My aching bosom has of grief since known ;
 Of many a friend I've followed since the bier,
 But never have I felt as then—alone.

I saw them lay thee in the grave ; I heard
 The solemn words consigning thee to dust :
 Forgive, O Lord ! if in that hour I err'd,
 And in my anguish cast away my trust.

But sleep the painful thought ! what though my breast
 Felt then, feels still the pang of active woe ;
 I have a mother yet on whom I rest,
 Whose care for me no change can ever know.

In her loved bosom I have cradled been,
 And she hath led my steps from youth till now ;
 My wayward temper she hath borne, nor e'en
 Reproach e'er cast my spirit proud to bow.

And she hath borne neglect, and such neglect
 As ne'er to earthly parent I have shown ;
 Yet her frail child has ceased not to protect
 Or woo into the path oft shunned though known.

In weal or woe, in sickness or in health,
 When kindness cheer'd me, or when foes oppressed,
 In years of poverty, or days of wealth,
 Her strength upheld me, or her comfort bless'd.

Nor will she ever leave me or forsake,
 No death can wrest her from my trusting soul;
 Beside my parting bed her stand she'll take,
 And when I need it most, each pang control.

Gently my past offences she will chide,
 Yet leave no error hidden from my view;
 Shew me my guilt, but lest my strength subside,
 Her pledge of pardon and of love renew.

And well, too well, I know that bitter tears
 Of conscious guilt, of folly, she will draw;
 Yet will her voice sound sweetest in my ears,
 Temp'ring with humble hope, my trembling awe.

And when at length in death I shall be led
 A home to ask, her sheltering arms will ope;
 For that long slumber she will make my bed,
 Will make my covering—faith; my pillow—hope.

That mother is the Church, my Saviour's bride,
 By him for ever blessed, eternal made;
 By his most Holy Spirit sanctified,
 And in his robes of righteousness arrayed.

Then help me, Lord, nor let presumptuous thought
 My weak unstable heart to sin betray;
 Teach me to feel that safety must be sought
 In thine own ark, in thy appointed way.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Proverbs ii. *Epistle*, Philippians i. 3.

Evening Lesson, Proverbs iii. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xvii. 21.

COLLECT.

LORD, we beseech Thee to keep Thy household the Church in continual godliness; that through Thy protection it may be free from all adversities and devoutly given to serve Thee in good works, to the glory of Thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The whole body of Christ's Church is one family, or as the Collect for the day expresses it—one household: unanimity, tenderness, forbearance and holiness, are therefore the indispensable duties of all its members. Without these we endanger its very safety, and dishonour that holy name whose glory should be our aim. They who utter this prayer with sincerity, do, in reality, renew their baptismal covenant, and engage themselves to preserve the bond of peace, and to live in the righteousness of one faith, one Master, and one Lord.

The Epistle strictly harmonizes with the Collect; and is a beautiful exemplification of that charity in his own character, which the Apostle so strongly and so feelingly inculcates upon us. In no portion of

his writings, perhaps, is the beauty of his disposition more clearly shewn than in this. Dignified though meek, gentle and affectionate, the eternal welfare of his beloved converts and the glory of his divine Master, awake his deepest solicitude and his most fervent zeal. So lovely is the spirit of Christianity—so disinterested in itself—so diffusive—so universal in its care of others. But we must not merely admire, we must imitate him. Prayer for others; prayer for spiritual blessings was earnestly offered by him to the throne of grace, and as such is more than lawful in ourselves, is our bounden and express duty, sanctioned too as it is by the example of our blessed Saviour himself.

The Gospel perfects the previous Lesson we have received, and pointing out the full extent of the duty of forgiveness, in the beautiful parable of the unforgiving servant, leaves us without excuse if we refuse the prayer of those who have offended us, and warns us, at the peril of our salvation, against an unmerciful and obdurate temper.

The Proper Lessons are in praise of that true and heavenly wisdom whose fount, observes the good Bishop Jolly, is God himself, promulgated to us by Christ, the essential wisdom of the Father, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and who is the animating spirit of these Proverbs, which hence become truly Christian morality to us, a guide, a light and an inexhaustible storehouse of instruction.

PROVERBS iii. 12.

Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth.

CAN God indeed delight in woe ?
Must he be served with streaming eye ?
Proof of his love the tears that flow,
The mournful groan, the heavy sigh ?

Must chosen hearts most sorely bleed ?
Must friends forsake us, loved ones die ?
Then costly were his love indeed—
And well might we the boon deny.

Does thus the world its votaries use,
Are sighs, or tears its best reward ?
Why should our God his smiles refuse ?
Why make alone his service hard ?

Hush, murmurer, hush ! thy God is true,
And wise the ways to you unknown ;
In sorrows that thy cheeks bedew
His richest mercy oft is shewn.

Does fertile earth's fair bosom yield
Its fruits unless her breast we wound ?
Or is its brightness clear revealed
Till flames the melting ore surround ?

Yet for a little while alone
The Lord his loved afflicts with grief;
And though he smites he heeds the groan,
And notes it in th' eternal leaf.

As tender sire corrects the child
In whom his fondest hope abides,
Though stern his brow his heart is mild,
And softens most when most he chides :

So God, our Father, smites in love,
Nor spares the keen afflictive blow
When other means but vain would prove
To wean our souls from sin and woe.

Unseen to us he still is nigh,
His voice unheard breathes peace and rest;
He wipes the tear, he checks the sigh,
And makes us e'en in anguish blest.

Nor may affliction last too long,
He knows our strength, he knows our frame;
Knows too the hour to bind the strong,
And save the weak from lasting shame.

Gives clearer visions of the bliss
Extatic, and to change unknown,
Of those our aching bosoms miss,
Till we forget we are alone.

To hope, to think, that we are dear
Must change to bliss the deepest woe,
The saddest hour with rapture cheer,
And wake an angel's joy below.

Yet 'twere a daring thing to ask
A sharper test—a heavier part—
The trial might a truth unmask,
And shew a weak or faithless heart.

A better prayer, oh ! teach us, Lord :
To thee alone we stand revealed ;
Submission to thy will accord
Although its purpose be concealed.

TWENTY - THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Proverbs xi. *Epistle*, Philippians, iii. 17.
Evening Lesson, Proverbs xii. *Gospel*, St. Matt. xxii. 15.

COLLECT.

O God, our refuge and strength, who art the Author of all godliness; be ready, we beseech Thee, to hear the devout prayers of Thy Church; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully, we may obtain effectually; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Many and sore are the evils of life, and powerful the temptations that assail us, but they who take God for their strength and refuge, will never want comfort under the first, nor grace to resist the latter. Flying then to the throne of mercy, we beseech our heavenly Father in this Sunday's Collect to hear the devout prayers of his united children, and ourselves annexing the condition on which we hope to be answered, implore Him to grant those things *effectually* which we ask *faithfully*, and that only on the ground of our relationship to Christ. Our petition is for spiritual blessings; yet as godliness has not only the promise of the life to come, but also of that which

now is, what our ignorance forbids us to ask for, is frequently in mercy added unto us.

We are encouraged in the Epistle, by the example of the great Apostle, to walk in those virtues for which we have prayed, following him as he followed Christ, and looking forward, like him, to the great day of reward, the final appearing of our Lord and Saviour. The hope of a future state is the stay and comfort of this. "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upwards," and various as severe are the trials and sufferings that lie between our cradle and our grave. Vice is often triumphant and virtue neglected and persecuted. Conscious of this defect in man's condition, the heathen world hoped rather than believed in the immortality of the soul; but the glorious truth was made manifest by our Lord and Saviour. We no longer "see," in this respect, as "through a glass darkly." If our knowledge of a world to come is limited, it is clear and satisfactory. God has revealed the blessed truth of a life after death to us. Christ has given a pledge of it in his resurrection and ascension, and the Holy Spirit, in seasons when, without such support, we should be seen "of all men most miserable," breathes the assurance of it in consolations not to be uttered, enabling us to rise superior to the greatest trials.

In the Gospel the divine prudence and wisdom of Christ, in extricating himself from the insidious snares laid for him by his enemies, is propounded for our serious consideration and imitation. Taking our blessed

Lord for our guide in this, as well as in every other respect, thus must we cautiously and wisely meet the enemies that would entrap us, and be ever on our guard against every artful and varied attempt to betray us. In the broad rule which our Lord has laid down "to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which belong to God," he has for ever settled the question as to the duty of submission to lawful government, as well as to the reverence we are to pay the Lord, our Almighty Sovereign, his service, his ministers, his Sabbath, and his sanctuary. By a faithful performance of the first part of our duty, our earthly sojourn may be peaceful and easy; by the latter, we may live happily for ever hereafter.

The maxims of wisdom contained in the Proper Lessons for the day will aid us in our spiritual defence, and furnish us with such weapons as, properly used, will defeat the malice of the great enemy of our souls, and protect us in the still more hazardous warfare with the world and ourselves.

PROVERBS xi. 24.

There is that scattereth and yet increaseth.

FEAR not ; or great or small thy store,
Feed thou the hungry, clothe the poor ;
Let not the orphan cry in vain,
Nor the lone widow sad complain :
Th' oppressed, the sick, be thine the care—
Let all thy humble bounty share ;
Nor, cold, reproach them with their woe,
The art to give take care to know :
The smallest boon a gentle smile endears,
The frigid look congeals our grateful tears.

Nor shall thy stores, so used, decrease,
Or fear of want invade thy peace.
The liberal hand but throws the grain
To spring anew with tenfold gain ;
The bread upon the waters cast
Shall be re-found with joy at last :
No simple gift, no gentle word,
Is unrecorded or unheard
By Him who makes his poorest members claim
Best proof of love and reverence for his name.

Himself most bounteous giver heed :
Mark the rich increase of the seed ;

Perished to sight and all decayed,
 Soon it puts forth or flower or blade,
 While clouds from earth or ocean raised,
 Re-clothe the fields by cattle grazed ;
 The more she opes her ample breast
 In greater beauty Nature 's drest :
 'Tis only when she guards with churlish care
 The wealth she hides, we see her blank and bare.

All give but to receive again,
 None talents may possess in vain—
 The sun with ardent fire is fed
 That he again may glory shed ;
 The moon receives her gentle light
 To clothe with silver garb the night ;
 And rivers swell the ample sea
 That they may each replenished be ;
 And grateful trees yield back in fruits and shade,
 Earth's kindly nutriment, thus doubly paid.

Then follow nature's wholesome law,
 And knowledge from her precepts draw ;
 Since all creation bids thee learn,
 Lo ! humbly wise thy path discern.
 That riches may increase, give more,
 Good measure mete and running o'er :
 The wealth that moulders in thy chest,
 But slumbers there to mar thy rest ;
 But ye shall reap, who scatter here your store,
 Where moth devours and rust corrupts no more.

TWENTY - FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Proverbs xiii. *Epistle*, Colossians i. 3.
Evening Lesson, Proverbs xiv. *Gospel*, St. Matt. ix. 18.

COLLECT.

O LORD, we beseech Thee, absolve Thy people from their offences; that through Thy bountiful goodness we may all be delivered from the bands of those sins which by our frailty we have committed. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

The year having now nearly drawn to its close, the Church, taking a review of the past, and conscious how much and how frequently the frailty of our nature even amidst our best desires and endeavours after holiness, has betrayed us into error, converts her usual petitions into a prayer for absolution. Humiliating indeed is the reflection that we are, at the best, but unprofitable servants; but happy are they and they only who, owning the truth, fly to Him who alone can pardon the past and give grace for the future.

The Epistle very affectingly calls our attention to the duties of our holy profession, and excites us

to a faithful performance of them, by directing us to the end and aim of our obedience—salvation through Christ. The Gospel for this day consists of two miracles, in both of which the Omnipotence of our Saviour is strikingly displayed. The raising of Jairus' daughter, in particular, tends to strengthen our faith, to enliven our hopes, and to quicken our love for Him whose power is undiminished, and whose goodness is equally inexhaustible. He is "the same to-day, and yesterday, and for ever;" a God present to deliver us in time of need, to shield our bodies from evil, and to raise our spirits from the sleep of sin to the active service of righteousness. Nor is this the only instruction that we may gather from this portion of Scripture. In the words of Bishop Hall (and whose can ever be more to the point?) "We may learn to give due honour to our blessed Lord. 'He took her by the hand, and called; saying, Maid, arise; and her spirit came again, and she arose straightway.' How could that touch, that call, be other than effectual? He who made that hand, touched it; and He who shall one day say, 'Arise, ye dead!' said now, 'Maid, arise!' Death cannot but obey Him, who is the Lord of life. The soul is ever equally in His hand, who is the God of spirits: it cannot but go, and come, at His command. When He says, 'Maid, arise,' the now dissolved spirit knows his office, his place, and instantly reassumes that room, which by His appointment it had left. O Saviour! if Thou do but bid

my soul to arise from the death of sin, it cannot lie still; if Thou bid my body to arise from the grave, my soul cannot but glance down from her heaven, and animate it. In vain shall my sin or my grave offer to withhold me from Thee."

The Proper Lessons are replete with holy maxims and rules of life, and demand our serious consideration. But let us beware that we do not deceive ourselves. It is in vain to read or to meditate, if at the same time we do not apply what we read to the improvement of our hearts and the better regulation of our lives. Consideration and reflection, thus made to bear upon ourselves, leave mere knowledge at an immeasurable distance in the scale of real value and importance. Much easier is it, however, to collect the rich stores of learning, to arm ourselves with all the subtleties of argument, to decide with critical accuracy upon contested points, or to appreciate with the most lively pleasure and correct taste, the beauties with which the sacred volume abounds, than to turn the mirror of truth to our own bosom, and profit by the images that we there see reflected. We, like the degenerate children of faithful Abraham, but too frequently deserve the reproach that was uttered against them. Scripture is to us, what the Prophet's preaching was to them — "As a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well upon an instrument," for, we, like them, "hear God's words and do them not."

ST. MATTHEW ix. 24.

The maid is not dead, but sleepeth,

SLEEP—death ! The substance and the form.
 On either who may gaze and not feel awe ?
 I never see one laid in slumber deep
 Whom much I love but something strange doth creep
 Through every vein. 'Tis not the storm
 Of passion waked at sight of that stern law,
 Which levels all in dust ; but secret dread,
 Perchance, of that sad hour which dooms them dead.

Sleep—death ! On either as we look,
 The rapid current of life's fount doth cease.
 Scarce conscious of the truth, our breath we hold ;
 We wish and yet forbear that form to fold
 To our fond breast which may not brook
 Too long such pause, such fearful calm of peace :
 But yearns that slumber to disturb, and hear
 The voice which dwelt like music on our ear.

Sleep—death ! Alike unconscious both
 Of the fond look, the love that watches nigh,
 The stealthful step, the all-engrossing thought,
 Or (proof of heart with deepest feelings fraught)

The quick, short sigh—the tear as loth,
 Or half afraid to quit the stedfast eye:
 Nor thought, nor look, nor moan, nor tear of ours
 Can sympathy excite, or rouse those powers.

Sleep—death! Yet differing each in this.
 As oft we gaze on one in your embrace,
 Such tenderness of love will fill the heart,
 We bend our cheek to theirs—O death! the start
 Which follows that first chilly kiss.
 Then, then we feel whose stamp is on that face,
 And all the love that once had made us blest
 Returns affrighted to our own lone breast.

Sleep—death! Effects the same we trace
 Common to both, in those who silent lie
 In either state. Where fled the hopes, the cares,
 The love, the hate, the schemes ambition dares?
 All; all laid low. Ye both efface
 Visions of brightest bliss, thoughts proud and high,
 Mem'ry of what once pleased or pained them most,
 Nor feel they love acquired nor friendship lost.

Sleep—death! As one in truth ye are.
 One source ye own—one conqueror ye shall have.
 In man's infirmity ye take your birth,
 And both denote him but a child of earth;

Yet for a waking both prepare !
A morn shall dawn on each—the bed, the grave—
In Christ alike we sleep, or lie in death—
His power secures, his love restores our breath.

Sleep—death ! Holy alike are ye !
The Lord of life, th' eternal Prince of peace,
Hath sanctified you both, and welcome made,
When on his pillow, in the cold grave laid,
Earth saw him dead—asleep the sea.
Now rest alike ye bring and blest release,
Or for the weary frame or eager soul
Panting for realms where neither claims control.

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Morning Lesson, Proverbs xv. *Epistle*, Jeremiah xxiii. 5.

Evening Lesson, Proverbs xvi. *Gospel*, St. John vi. 5.

COLLECT.

STIR up, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the wills of Thy faithful people ; that they plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of Thee be plenteously rewarded ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This is the last of the Sunday Collects for the year, for though the number of Sundays after Trinity is regulated by the time that Easter falls, this is reserved for the close.

Success in every undertaking depends in great measure, upon the energy with which it is pursued. If the mind or will be uninterested, little will be accomplished, and even that little will bear the sickly stamp of our indifference. In our spiritual, as in our earthly career, this is essentially true. Justly then do we pray the Almighty in this Collect to arouse our sluggish affections, and to "stir up our wills" by the divine flame of the Holy Spirit, that pursuing our course with patience and *perseverance*

(for the fruit of good works like those of the earth are not of sudden and spontaneous growth, but the produce of continued and careful labour) we may at last reap in the great day of harvest our reward. Thus an appropriate connexion is observed between the season of the year and that awful event which is to seal up time for ever.

As the year began with Christ, so does it end with Him, for He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last. The Epistle accordingly with direct reference to Advent, gives notice of the approach of the Messiah, and of the blessed consequences of his appearance, cheering the hearts of the humble, the faithful and the penitent by the title accorded to Him, "the Lord our Righteousness." We indeed are impure, and our best deeds are stained and spotted with infirmity and sin, and a review of one year's actions alone is calculated to fill the heart with apprehension for the result of the final judgment; but our weakness shall be covered by his strength, our defects by his merits, and his righteousness shall be imputed to our sincerity. Hope then reposes upon faith, which receives fresh accession from the Gospel, where we behold in Him, who miraculously fed the five thousand in the wilderness, that same gracious Being, who is equally ready to satisfy all who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and with grateful hearts we join with the multitude in proclaiming him "the Prophet who should come into the world."

Of the Proper Lessons the same may be said as of those for Sunday last. Wise is he who will apply the holy maxims they contain to his own heart and conduct; for better "indeed it is to gain wisdom than gold, and to choose understanding than silver." Blessed, thrice blessed are they, who, being found rich in good works towards God, firm in faith and sound in doctrine, may look with humble confidence to the glorious appearing of their Lord and Saviour, and regard the gate of the grave only as the entrance to that heavenly inheritance which is the purchase of that Saviour's manifestation, and all-sufficient sacrifice and death.

JEREMIAH xxiii. 5.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

'Tis done—the sacred year is closed,
The faithful Church her own bright sun
As her dear Lord, not man imposed,
Has followed and her service run,
In proof of her obedience and love,
Owning not earthly rule but mandate from above.

She watched the day-star from on high
Rising with healing on its wing;
She heard the strains that filled the sky,
In honour of the new-born king;
And echoing sublime the rapt'rous song,
Her joyful children taught to join th' angelic throng.

With Gentile kings she lowly knelt,
With them her offerings duly paid;
Nor weary of the service felt,
But long the season gladly staid.
She thought upon the darkness once her own,
And dearer prized the beams that bright upon her shone.

398 TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And she beheld her Light, her Lord,
By cruel hands betrayed and slain ;
And wept, although the mercy stored
For guilty man's most heinous stain
She made the subject of her grateful theme,
While with unceasing love she own'd him God supreme.

She had beheld with tearful eye
The moon that lit her Lord to death ;
Had with the watchers hovered nigh
O'er the rich prey earth held beneath.
But lo ! her Lord is risen ! those strains attest,
Her festival she keeps, her highest, holiest, best.

Awhile his presence glads her sight,
While ampler lessons she receives
To fit her for the coming fight
Which, when the earth her Master leaves,
The world and satan 'gainst her fierce shall wage,
And keep her free from stain amidst each sinful age.

She saw the angels bear him far
To realms unpierced by mortal view ;
But follows still her guiding star,
And patient waits till he endue
With power from high, by his own Spirit brought,
The children of his love, the spouse his blood has bought.

The Comforter is come. With fire
Baptized, all knowledge hence is hers ;
Now may she feed each just desire,
And lead to truth the soul that errs.

The orphan band which she alone could claim,
See! thousands swell beneath the once abhorred name.

Perfect in faith, her first, her last,
Her deepest mystery she hath shewn ;
The triple chord that binds her fast,
And marks her for the bridegroom's own.

Hence like a duteous mother she has fed
All those with saving truths for whom the Saviour bled.

But still her joy is incomplete,
Her elder sons are yet estranged ;
In vain she spreads her arms to greet
Those whom the Spirit has not changed.

And much she mourns and many a prayer must breathe,
Till Jewish hands with gifts her holy columns wreath.

And they her own shall surely be—
Their numbers must her triumphs swell :
In peace they shall return, and free
In their loved land again to dwell.

Their king of David's line all lips shall bless,
All hearts proclaim 'tis He—THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

In mercy then their ears incline,
 Soon let thy Israel, Lord, be saved ;
 Once more acknowledge Judah thine,
 Whom love upon thy right hand graved ;
 And quickly let thy promise be fulfilled,
 The household vines restore—the ruined cities build.

Then shall one wide extended fold,
 One universal shepherd own ;
 The world her Maker shall behold,
 Nor human strife again be known.
 New earth, new skies, where peace shall ever reign
 Shall dawn once more on man, and Eden bloom again.

Now nature lies beneath a pall,
 Nor does the church her glad notes sing ;
 But watchful waits th' arousing call
 That brings her everlasting spring.
 Then hasten, Lord, thy blest return we pray,
 The final Advent grant, the great triumphal day !

October, 1842.

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